

U L Y 1 9 9 8

PRICE: HK\$38

China

O U R I S M

CAVE DWELLINGS IN NORTHERN CHINA

BEIHAI — SUNSHINE,
SAND AND SEAFOOD

FLOATING ON HOTAN RIVER
HAILUO GULLY GLACIER PARK

216

ISSN 1025-577X



9 771025 577006

A F A M O U S S H A N G H A I B R A N D

Rose

*Fashion for
Women*

SHANGHAI GARMENTS I/E CO., LTD. O.I.C.

TOWER A, 85 LOUSHANGUAN RD., SHANGHAI, CHINA

TEL: (021) 62789999

POST CODE: 200336 TELEX: 33036 GAREX CN

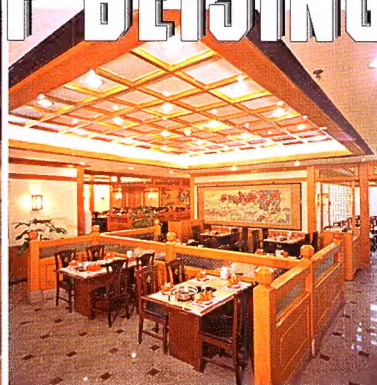
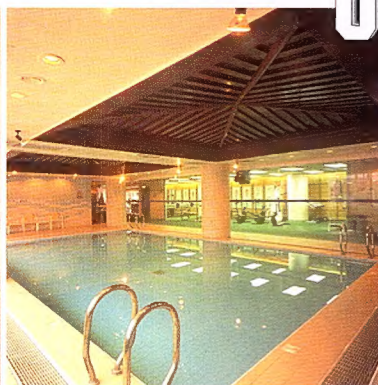
FAX: (021) 62781818 62781898

CABLE: 4545 SHANGHAI

Hotel • Apartments • Offices • Arcade

THE LANDMARK

OF BEIJING



Conveniently located between the Capital Airport and the city proper.

Situated in Beijing's commercial and cultural centre, it has foreign embassies on its periphery and enjoys an amiable environment surrounded by green trees with views of the Liangma River.

Facilities include business centre, fitness centre, bank, post office, beauty salon, shopping arcade, ballroom and meeting rooms. A fine selection of restaurants is available which includes the Hard Rock Cafe, Food Court and Tao Ran Ju Chinese Restaurant.



北京亮马河大厦
BEIJING LANDMARK TOWERS

中国北京朝阳区东三环北路8号 邮政编码: 100004

8 North Dongsanhuan Road, Chaoyang District,

Beijing 100004, China

电话Tel: 86-10-6590 6688/6590 6588(Sales)

传真Fax: 86-10-6590 6513

电子信箱Email: lmt@public.gb.com.cn

http: //www.chinatour.com/lmt/a.html

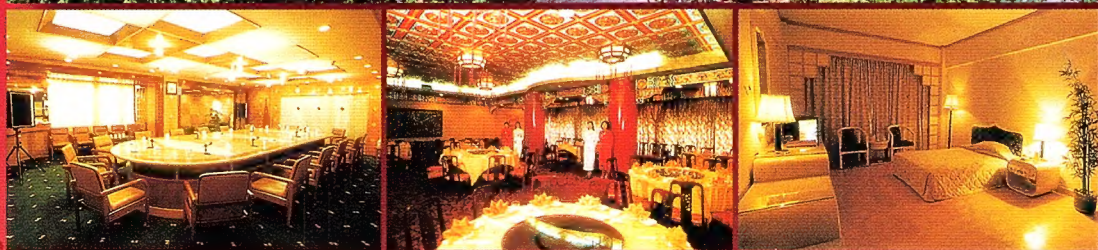


湘江賓館



XIANG JIANG HOTEL

中國·湖南 HUNAN CHINA



The hotel is conveniently situated in the city centre of Changsha, Hunan. Its 300 air-conditioned rooms are equipped with stereo radios, cable TV and IDD and DDD telephones. Other facilities include conference room, Chinese and Western restaurants, bar, ballroom, karaoke rooms, sauna, gymnasium, business centre, shopping arcade and ticketing service for rail and air travel.

湘江賓館位於長沙市繁華區中山路36號，交通便利。

賓館擁有高雅別致的各類客房300間(套)。各類客房均設有中央空調、IDD、DDD直撥電話、立體音響、國際衛星電視接收系統等。還設有會議室、中餐廳、西餐廳、酒吧、歌舞廳、卡拉OK、桑拿、健身按摩、商務中心、購物中心、票務部等。

湘江賓館熱忱歡迎您惠顧。

地址：中國湖南省長沙市中山路36號 Address: 36 Zhongshan Road, Changsha, Hunan, China 電話 Tel: 0731- 4408888 4408013
傳真 Fax: 0731-4448285 電傳 Telex: 98131 XIANG CN 電掛 Cable: 6666 郵編 Post Code: 410005

它擁有您一樣的精神活力

It has
liveliness
that equals
your own.



40 years in business

US\$400 million of annual export

Trade with 50 countries and regions

A large national export enterprise

廣東省絲綢進出口(集團)公司
GUANGDONG SILK IMP. & EXP. CORP. (GROUP)

北京新世纪饭店 BEIJING NEW CENTURY HOTEL

See the Summer Palace, then come back and relax by the pool.
(Why didn't the Empress Dowager think of this?)

US\$ 71
per room,
per night

Appreciate the luxuries of modern life with our Luxury Summer Plan. Standard Room (single/double occupancy), RMB 600 (US\$71). Standard Room plus breakfast, RMB 660 (US\$78) (single occupancy) or RMB 720 (US\$85) (double occupancy). Plus other benefits*.

For reservations, call **86 (10) 6849 1108** or your travel professional.

*Available from 1 July to 31 August. Benefits include welcome drink, late checkout (3:00 pm), 15% laundry discount, use of indoor pool, gym, and sauna, use of downtown shuttle bus, and the option to purchase an authentic Chinese scroll painting for only RMB 150 (US\$18). For other room types, 40% off the rack rate (with breakfast). Rates subject to 15% service charge and RMB 12 per night city tax.

6 Southern Road Capital Gym, Beijing, China 100044 Phone: 86 (10) 6849 2001 Fax: 86 (10) 6849 1103/1104

ANA Hotels International



杭州五洲大酒店，中外合资，荟萃现代先进技术之精华
25层高的杭州五洲大酒店
洁白晶莹，座落在美丽的西子湖畔
为杭州市金融、商业中心所环抱
典雅的异国氛围融汇在中国风格之中，带给您至上的享受。



“五洲”会成为您的家外之家，因为全体“五洲人”努力奉献真诚、友谊和无微不至的关怀。

地址：中国浙江省杭州市平海路新2号
电话：(0571)7088088 传真：(0571)7077618 邮编：310006
E-mail:hzch@public.hz.zj.cn
香港中旅酒店管理有限公司管理



Hangzhou Continental Hotel

杭州五洲大酒店

就在这里
山在聆听 风在舞着
许下最真的诺言

CHINA ARTEX CORPORATION GUANGDONG CO.

Over 30 years experience in the business of drawnworks & embroideries, exporting more than 100 kinds of hand-made embroideries. We also supply traditional Chinese Arts & Crafts products. OUR PRODUCT RANGES ARE :

- Drawnworks & Embroideries
- Quilted Products
- Garments and Garment Accessories
- Home Textiles Printed Collection
- Beaded Embroidered Products
- Hats & Gloves
- Christmas Gifts & Premium
- Shoes & Sporting Shoes
- Suitcases & Bags
- Leather Products



中国抽纱广东进出口公司

CHINA ARTEX CORPORATION GUANGDONG CO.

Add: Guangdong Artex Bldg., 85-97 Zhongshan Rd. 7, Guangzhou, China Post Code: 510145

Tel: (86)20-81844368 Fax: (86)20-81842768/81842968

E-mail: gdartex@public.guangzhou.gd.cn

Attn: Miss. Lin Xiao Bing

一卡在手 走遍神州

WITH SUCH A CARD AS YOU TRAVEL IN CHINA



北京饭店
Beijing Hotel
北京 Beijing



东方宾馆
DongFang Hotel
广州 Guangzhou



锦江宾馆
JinJiang Hotel
四川 Sichuan



富豪大酒店
Regent Hotel
大连 Dalian



西湖大酒店
Lakeside Hotel
福州 Fuzhou



榕湖饭店
Rong Hu Hotel
桂林 Guilin



京港酒店
Hotel Concourse
香港 HongKong



金陵饭店
Jinling Hotel
南京 Nanjing



金海湾大酒店
Golden Gulf Hotel
汕头 Shantou



锦江饭店
Jin Jiang Hotel
上海 Shanghai



深圳湾大酒店
Shenzhen Bay Hotel
深圳 Shenzhen



天津水晶宫饭店
The Crystal Palace Hotel
天津 Tianjin



悦华酒店
Mandarin Hotel
厦门 Xiamen



石景山旅游中心
Paradise Hill Hotel
珠海 Zhuhai



香港中国旅行社有限公司
Hongkong/CTS
香港 Hongkong



锦华大酒店
King World Hotel
昆明 Kunming



总统酒店
Hotel Presidente
澳门 Macau



海天大酒店
Haitian Hotel
青岛 Qingdao



重庆宾馆
Chongqing Guest House
重庆 Chongqing



杭州友好饭店
Friendship Hotel
杭州 Hangzhou



竹辉饭店
Bamboo Grove Hotel
苏州 Suzhou



中山国际酒店
Zhongsha International Hotel
中山 Zhongshan



南中国大酒店
South China Hotel
三亚 Sanya



东港大酒店
East Seaport Hotel
宁波 Ningbo



武汉亚洲大酒店
Wuhan Asia Hotel
武汉 Wuhan



康乐园大酒店
Kangle Garden Resort
兴隆 XingLong



环岛泰大酒店
Huandao Tide Hotel
海口 Haikou



银城酒店
Hotel Silverland
东莞 Dongguan



泰山华侨大厦
Taishan Overseas Chinese Hotel
泰安 Taian



威海卫大厦
Weihaiwei Mansion
威海 Weihai



银海酒店
Silver Sea Hotel
湛江 Zhanjiang



名门饭店
Noble Hotel
长春 Changchun



常州大酒店
Changzhou Grand Hotel
常州 Changzhou



河北宾馆
Hebei Grand Hotel
石家庄 Shijiazhuang



锡州宾馆
Xizhou Grand Hotel
无锡 Wuxi



山西大酒店
Shanxi Grand Hotel
太原 Taiyuan



贵州饭店
Guizhou Park Hotel
贵阳 Guiyang



富华大酒店
Fuwah Hotel
潍坊 Weifang

一张 VIP 卡在手, 37 间酒店手拉手
为尊敬的客人们, 提供贵宾级享受!

凡是持有「中国名酒店 VIP 俱乐部」统一的 CFHC 卡的人士, 将可以在中国大陆、香港、澳门等 37 个地区的 37 家名酒店内, 荣誉地获得贵宾级的礼遇、享受和优惠。欢迎垂询、光临。

中国名酒店 VIP 俱乐部常设机构:
广州东方宾馆 传真: (86-20)86673980 电话: (86-20)86669900 - 7968

With a VIP card in your hand, 37 hotels offer you,
our honourable guests, VIP-grade enjoyment!

Holders of the unified CFHC card of CHINA FAMOUS HOTEL VIP CLUB will accord the bearer a VIP - grade courteous reception and preferential treatment in the 37 famous hotels in the 37 cities. You will find everything convenient and comfortable be it in accommodation, recreation, trade of good service.

We always welcome inquiries and your patronage of our 37 member hotels.

The head office of CHINA FAMOUS HOTEL VIP CLUB:
Guangzhou Dong Fang Hotel Fax: (86-20)86673980 Tel: (86-20)86669900 - 7968

HIGHLIGHTS

The City of Beihai — Sun, Sand and Sea

Photos & article by Iris Wong

Touring Beihai, a coastal city by the Beibu Gulf in South China's Guangxi, your enjoyment goes far beyond the three-S factors for ordinary seaside resorts. Besides the 20-kilometre-long Silver Beach, you can also visit characteristic islands, fishing villages, and a sea-bed forest. And above all, it abounds with seafood.



FROM THE EDITOR

Tradition Revamped



CUISINE

Bozhou Sesame Seed Cakes

Photos & article by Shan Xiaogang

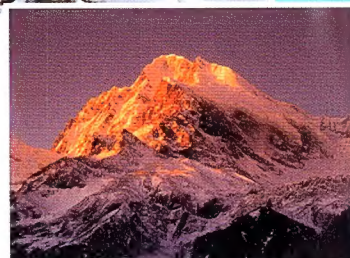


LANDSCAPES

Hailuo Gully — A Glacier Park

Photos by Huang Yunsheng Article by Shen Wanshu

In Hailuo Gully on the east slopes of Mt. Gongga in Luding County, Sichuan Province, lies a magnificent glacier. At an altitude of 2,850 metres above sea level, the glacier extends six kilometres into the forest — a congenial union of trees and ice that can be seen nowhere else in the world.



NOVELTIES

The Ming Imperial Waxworks Palace in Beijing

Photos by Shan Xiaogang, Tan Xiande Article by Shan Xiaogang

White Stone Bank

Photos by Wu Ping Article by Huang Yanhong

SHOPPING

Traditional Chinese Medicines in Jilin

Photos by Shan Xiaogang Article by Lang Yan

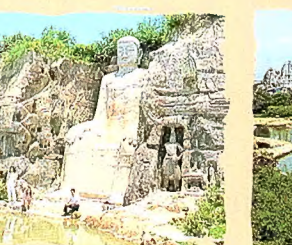
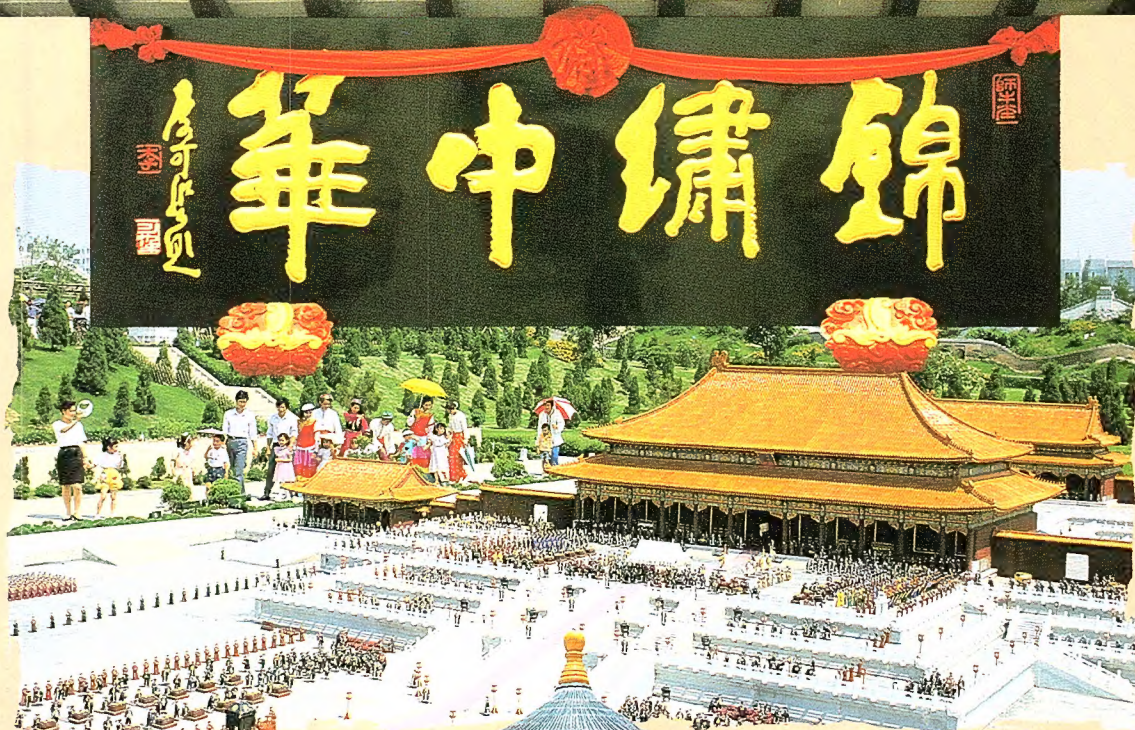
CONTENTS
No. 216 July 1998

A GLIMPSE AT THE THOUSAND-YEAR-OLD CIVILIZATIONS OF CHINA

TRAVEL OVER THE MAGNIFICENT MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS THROUGHOUT
CHINA IN A SINGLE DAY

THE WORLD'S LARGEST MINIATURE SCENERY PARK

"SPLENDID CHINA" SHENZHEN CHINA



China Travel Service (Hong Kong) Ltd.

General Agents for the business of "Splendid China"
in Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan as well as Overseas



Shenzhen Splendid China Development Co., Ltd.

HEAD OFFICE: 78-83 Connaught Road Central, Hong Kong. G.P.O. Box 6016 Tel: 28533888 Fax: 28541383 Cable: Travelbank Telex: 73344 HKCTS HX T/A Licence No. 350273

U.S. China Travel Service Inc. (Main Office)

L/L, 575 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94102, U.S.A.
Tel: (1-415)398 6627, (1-800)332 2831
Fax: (1-415)398 6669

Suite 303, U.S. CTS Building, 119 S. Atlantic Blvd.,
Monterey Park, CA 91754, U.S.A.
Tel: (1-818)457 8668 Fax: (1-818)457 8955

China Travel Service Inc.

801-803 Sabino, Pabilla Corner Espeleta St. Sta. Cruz,
Manila, Philippines.
Tel: (63-2)733 1274, 733 1276 Fax: (63-2)733 1431

Singa China Travel Service Pte. Ltd.

1 Park Road #03-49 to 52, People's Park Complex,
Singapore 059108.
Tel: (65)532 9988 Fax: (65)535 4912, 538 6068

China Travel Service (Thailand) Co., Ltd.

559 Yaowaraj Road, Sampuntawong, Bangkok 10100,
Thailand.
Tel: (66-2)226 0041 Fax: (66-2)226 4712-3
Tlx: 84470 CTSTHAI TH

China Travel Service (U.K.) Ltd.

CTS House 7 Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2H 9DL,
England.
Tel: (44-171)836 9911 Fax: (44-171)836 3121
Tlx: 263492 UKCTS G

China Travel Service (Aust) Pty. Ltd.

G/F., 757-759 George Street, Sydney, N.S.W. 2000,
Australia.
Tel: (61-2)9211 2633, 9281 7415
Fax: (62-1)9281 3595
Tlx: 73301 CTSSYD AA

China Travel Service (Canada) Inc.

(Main Office)
556 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6Z 1E9
Tel: (1-604)872 8787 Fax: (1-604)873 2823
Tlx: 01-54219

(Toronto Office)

438 University Avenue, Suite 306, Box 28 Toronto, Ont.
Canada M5G 2K8
Tel: (1-416)979 8993 Fax: (1-416)979 8220

China Travel Service (France) S.A.R.L.

32 Rue Vignon, 75009 Paris, France.
Tel: (33-1)4451 5566 Fax: (33-1)4451 5560

China Travel Service (Japan) Co., Ltd.

T 103 Buyoo Building, 3-8-16, Nihombashi, Chuo-ku,
Tokyo, Japan.
Tel: (81-3)3273 5512 Fax: (81-3)3273 2667
Tlx: 242 3968 CTSJPN J

China Travel & Trading (Deutschland) GmbH

(Main Office)
Düsseldorfer Strasse 14, D-60329 Frankfurt/Main,
F.R. Germany.
Tel: (49-69)238522, 238523, 238532
Fax: (49-69)232324

(Berlin Office)

Beusselstraße 5, D-10553 Berlin, Germany.
Tel: (49-30)393 4068 Fax: (49-30)391 8085

China Travel System (M) Sdn. Bhd.

Ground Floor, No. 112-114 Jalan Pudu, 55100
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
Tel: (60-3)201 8888 Fax: (60-3)201 3268

China Travel Service (Korea) Co., Ltd.

7/F., YooHwa Bldg., 995-16 Dacchi-Dong, Kangnam-Ku,
Seoul, Korea.
Tel: (82-2)566 9361 Fax: (82-2)557 0021

DISCOVERIES

Cave Dwellings — Homes on the Loess Plateau

Photos & article by Shan Xiaogang

A unique type of dwelling — a cave home — is standard for people living on the Loess Plateau in northern China. Following our correspondent, you will see caves of different forms: cliff-side caves, underground caves and stone caves. Though in one way or another, cave dwellings represent primitiveness, many newly built stone caves, equipped with modern facilities, have caught the envious eyes of the city dwellers.

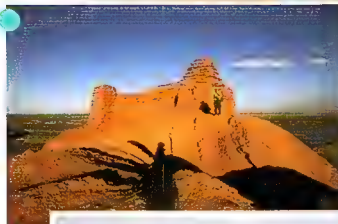


CHALLENGES

Floating on Hotan River in the Taklimakan Desert

Photos & article by Rebecca Lee

A group of explorers went through Taklimakan Desert, known as the "sea of death", in an unusual way this time. By floating on the seasonal river Hotan, they had some unique experiences — missing companions, falling into the water, sleeping on the sand without a tent, and struggling with the tossing waves.



LEISURE

The Joy of Getting Drenched — at the Water Splashing Festival

Photos & article by So Long Chi

PEOPLES

Tradition Lives Among the Baima

Photos by Chen Jin

The Baima are a small ethnic group residing in a mountainous area bordering Gansu and Sichuan provinces. Rarely known to outsiders, they live a primitive life with their unique traditional customs.



Shan Xiaogang

Cover: Adding finishing touches to a new cave

FOCUS

Bu Nong and His Bells

Photos by Li Zhixiong Article by Hua Yu

CULTURES

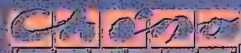
Three Special Collections in Shanxi

Photos by Shan Xiaogang Article by Shan Xiaogang, Wang Wenfu, Zhao Huixian

UPDATE

NEXT ISSUE

CONTENTS
No. 216 July 1998



Consultants (in alphabetical order)

Director
Vice Director & Editor-in-Chief
General Manager
Chief Executive Officer, Executive Editor-in-Chief
Vice General Managers
Vice Editors-in-Chief
Director of Reporting Dept.
Reporters
Editor
Assistant Editors
Director of English Editorial Dept.
Editor
Vice Director of Art Dept.
Senior Designer
Designers
Assistant Designer
Manager of Advertising Dept.
China Account Managers
Hong Kong Account Manager
Manager of Sales & Marketing Dept.
Business Development Manager
Director of Accounts & Administration Dept.

T. K. Ann, Ian Fok Chun Wan, Lam Chun,
Ma Chi Man, Ma Lin, Wong Tak Hoi,
James T. Wu, Howard Young
Tehan Fou-li
Wang Miao
Liu Yang
C. K. Tong
Liu Pin Moi, Kena Ho
Lai Chung For, Tu Nai Hsien, Chan Yat Nin
Shi Baokiu
Xie Guanghui, Huang Yanhong
Iris Wong
Yee Ker Choi, So Long Chi
Gloria Shang
Patricia Horton
Norris Tong
Joan Leung
Lau Yuk Yu, Yuen Wing Yin, Li Ming Yuen
Lily Lam
Kena Ho
Yu Xifan, Kung Man Kei, Tung Wai Ning
Wesley K. M. Kwong
Connie Lee
James Jiang
Kathy Wong

Editorial Dept., Business Dept., Advertising Dept., Sales Dept. Tel: 2561 8001

China Tourism Photo Library Tel: 2561 8001

Hong Kong China Tourism Ltd. Tel: 2516 9228

Licence No. 351850

Publisher: HK CHINA TOURISM PRESS

24/F, Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong

Tel: 2561 8001 Fax: 2561 8057 2561 8198

Printer: C & C Offset Printing Co. Ltd.

C & C Building, 36 Ting Lai Road, Tai Po, N.T. Tel: 2666 4988

Agencies: Australia Gordon and Gorch Ltd.,
25-37 Huntingdale Road, Burwood, Victoria
3125 • Belgium Sun-Wah Supermarket • Brazil
Comercio Importadora Karama Ltd. • Canada Sun
Wa Bookstore, Toronto, Van China Trade
Centre Ltd., Vancouver • China National
Publications Import & Export Corp., Beijing •
England Guanghua Company Ltd., London •
France Europeale S.A.R.L., Paris • Holland Ming
Ya, Amsterdam • Hong Kong Foreign Press Dis-
tributors Ltd. • Japan Koyashia Co. Ltd., Tokyo •
Macao Starlight Bookstore Ltd., The World Book
Company, Plaza Cultural Macau Ltd. • Malay-
sia Pustaka Lively, Tawau, Sabah • Singapore
International Book(s) Pte. Ltd. • Thailand Chew
Hong Service Ltd., Bangkok • The Philippines
Good Quality Merchandising, Manila • U.S.A.
China Periodical Distribution, Los Angeles, Ori-
ental Culture Enterprise Co., New York, China
Daily Distribution Corp., New York

China Advertising License: ICAD006

News-stand price: HK\$38

Printed in Hong Kong

Copyright reserved

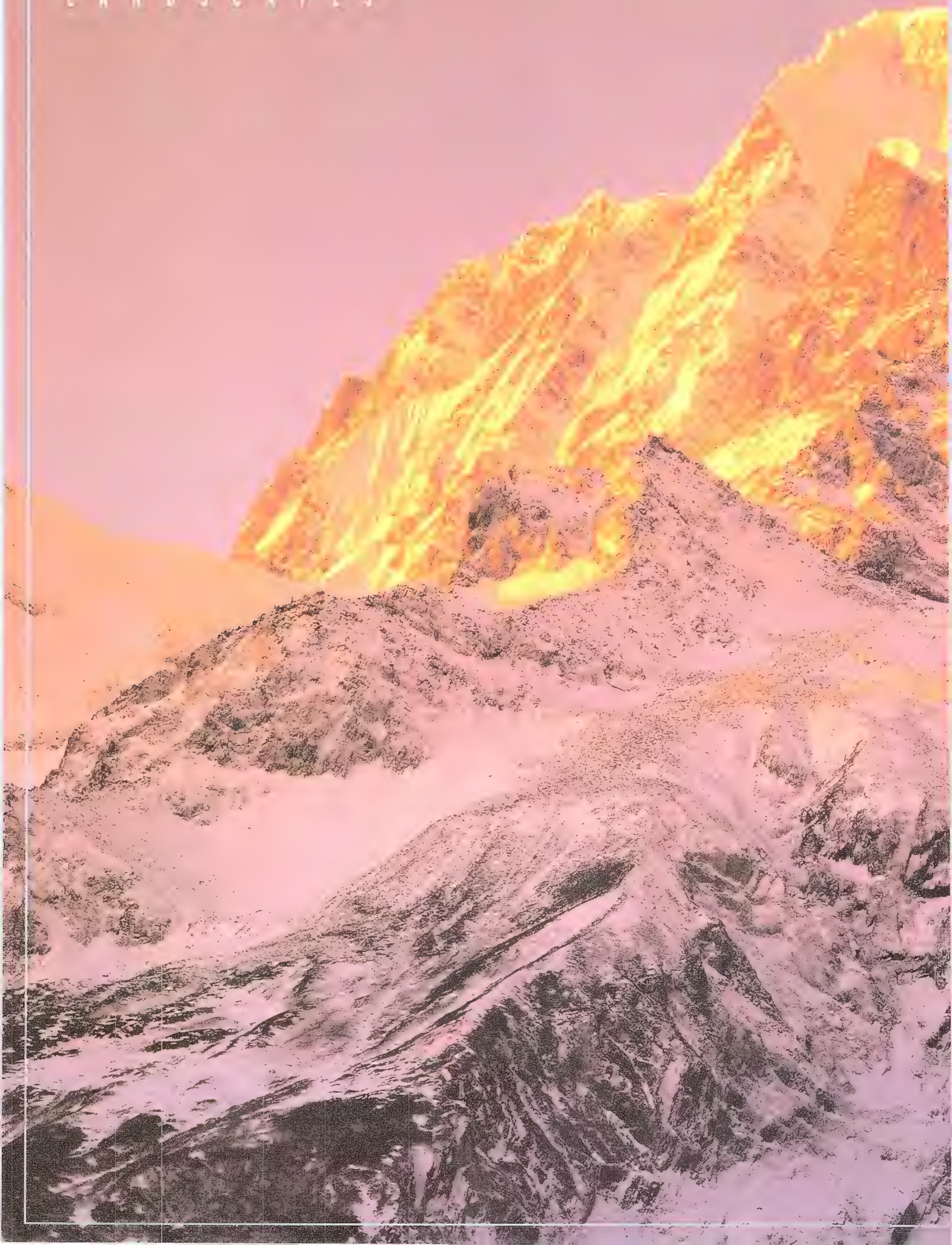
TRADITION | REVAMPED

Dwellings have always been a human necessity. We started off in caves and many of us have progressed to live in the common structures now seen in cities all over the world. And yet, in some areas on the Loess Plateau, local people still proudly live in cave dwellings.

Cave dwellings were primitive to start with, typically characteristic of a crude, early state of living. A universal requirement in human life, these shelters originally fulfilled the barest practical aspects — shelter from rain and wind. Over time they were gradually revamped and refined into more modern homes. And yet these homes have retained their characteristic, traditional cave-style not only out of necessity but out of the practicality of the style itself and also out of the attachment of the local people to this tradition. All of the advantages of ancient cave homes have remained an integral part of even the newest stone, individual cave dwellings, achieving a harmonious style reflecting the past yet having all the comforts of the present. DISCOVERIES in this issue will take you into various types of cave dwellings on the Loess Plateau — cliff-side caves, underground caves and individual stone caves. Here you can marvel at the ingenuity and pragmatism of the local people who have successfully mixed traditional style with modernisation in their cave dwellings.

Photo by Wang Dajun

L A N D S C A P E S





HAILUO GULLY

A GLACIER PARK

Photos by Huang

Article by Shen Wanshi

Glaciers — an icy world tucked away in some remote corner, itself mysterious, barren and frigid. In my mind it was a domain preserved for explorers, mountaineers and scientists. Yet when a new glacier reserve, the Hailuo (Conch) Gully Glacier & Forest Park, opened to the public, I realised my dream of visiting this glacial world.



A Primitive Wilderness of Serenity and Breathtaking Beauty

Previous page:
Gongga Mountain turns golden
under the sun. (by Tan Ming)

1. The forest at Conch Gully is a primitive world of towering trees, thick vines, and moss-grown ground.
2. The Great Ice Waterfall at Conch Gully is 15 times as large as the Huangguoshu Waterfalls of Guizhou.
3. Gongga Mountain, the "King of Sichuan Mountains"

The bus set off from Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province, and went to the southwest through Ya'an, Luding and Moxi, straight to Hailuo Gully.

The bus stopped at Campsite One in the heart of a primeval forest. Off the bus, I listened with dazed horror as our guide said that the only access to Campsite Three via Campsite Two was a 10-kilometre footpath which was so winding and tortuous that it would take over six hours to cover the entire distance. My mind raced through a litany of terrors such as poisonous snakes and deadly insects associated with virgin forests. A collective sigh of relief

sounded as we learned we could travel on horseback and that along the way we might have a succession of discoveries and pleasant surprises.

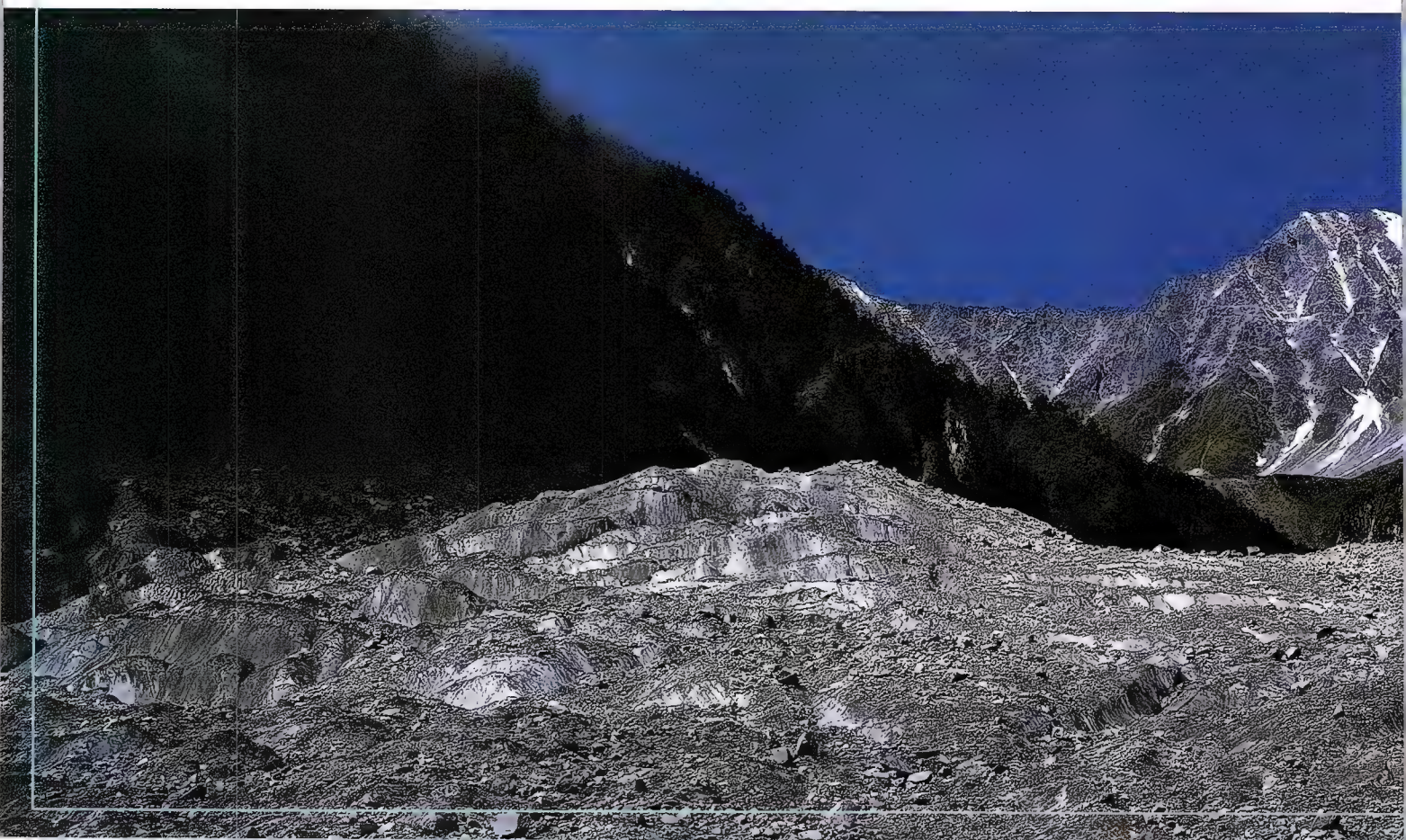
Into the depths of the wilderness we went; the tranquillity was disturbed only by the loud and straggling clip-clop of the horse hooves. The trees here were peculiar for they looked like a mob of giants with their heads lost in the clouds. Here and there a few sun rays managed to pierce through the network of green foliage darkened by a thick clusters of vines, only to disperse before reaching the moss-strewn ground.

Some eerie, rustling sounds emanated from the road ahead. As I reined in my horse, the local guide laughed. "Don't worry," he assured me. "Wild animals are more afraid of us. The sound of horse hooves has scared them away — only on foot can you see an antelope, chamois or rhesus monkey. But you can see lots of strange insects in the grass — some are rare species." As if on cue, a butterfly with spotted wings appeared. Though not an expert, I knew from its colours that it was no ordinary butterfly.

After five kilometres into the journey, Campsite Two appeared. It was located 2,600 metres above sea level and surrounded by snow-mantled mountains. The ground was cocooned in snow, with random hot springs emitting white clouds of vapour.

A tiny pond, fed from a nearby spring, mirrored the blue sky in its white bottom. The temptation of this natural

A Mountain Lake Reminds One of the Masterpiece of a Chinese Artist



sauna was too irresistible; we all stopped for a soothing dip.

Continuing up the mountain slope, through a stand of birch trees, I spotted something looking like a giant piece of emerald jadeite at the foot of a cliff. Closer examination revealed it was a moraine lake, fringed by a wide expanse of red-bean firs and broad-leaf azaleas. Its clear green waters enveloped in a multi-coloured drifting mist was reminiscent of the masterpiece of the brilliant Chinese oil painter, Lin Fengmian.

Campsite Three turned out to be three rows of wood cabins whose pointed European-style rooftops, painted in a wash of bright orange, evoked visions of fairy tales.

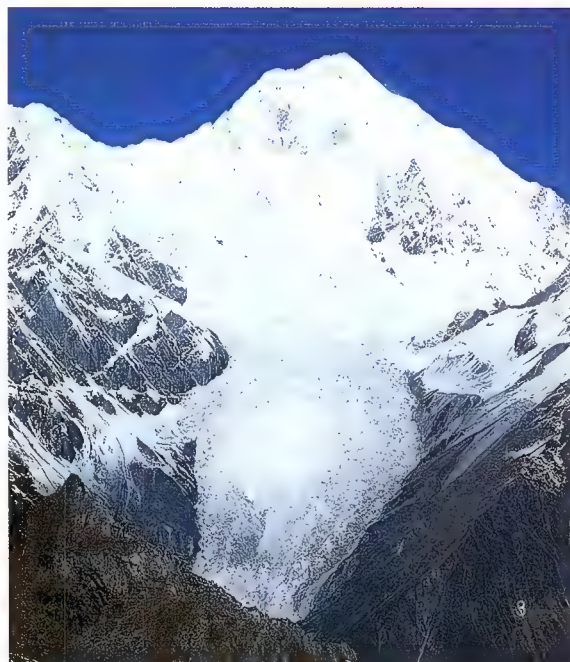
Early the next morning, defying the bitter cold, we waited silently in the courtyard for dawn to break, as the heavily wooded mountains seemed lost in deep slumber.

Gradually a pale brightness lightened the horizon, and then a sole morning ray pierced through the dim heavens like a sharp sword.

Suddenly the "sword" transformed into a million golden arrows shooting through the mist and clouds, landing on the summit of Gongga Mountain. In a split second, the icy white mountain peak added on a mantle of glistening gold — it seemed to have turned into a gold pinnacle. This stimulated a frenzied session of photography.

As we walked on a downy carpet of snow, someone shouted, "Glaciers! Glaciers!" and my heart jumped. Glaciers are synonymous with danger, for their slopes are pitted with fissures and unfathomable holes. An ice wall dozens of metres thick came into sight; hardly past an arched gateway bored through the bottom of the wall, we found ourselves rooted to the ground by the beauty unfolded before our eyes. Clusters of ice, transparent but with a faint blue tint, protruded from

All of a Sudden Gongga Mountain
Is Painted with a Golden Screen





Great Ice Waterfall — Multi-coloured Magic

the wall, along with numerous jade-like crystals which were blue outside and red inside, resembling exquisite agate.

From the observatory deck we caught the full view of the magnificent scenery. The slope of the glacier, extending for miles on end, is graced with archways, stairways, bridges and animal-like sculptures — all fashioned out of ice. The glacier is bordered by sheer cliffs shooting up several hundreds of metres into the sky from the depths of the primeval forest.

By a forest of black pine trees we ran into yet another awesome masterpiece of Mother Nature: a gigantic silver curtain spilling over the edge of a sky-high ice cliff that floated downward in a most breathtaking fashion. This extraordinary Great Ice Waterfall of Conch Gully measures 1,100 metres across and drops 1,080 metres; thus it is 15 times the size of the famous Huangguoshu Waterfalls in Guizhou Province.

Sunshine and shadows played magically upon this geological phenomenon. Azure blue mingled with orange and bright yellow in a random, majestic fashion, turning this part of the world into a dreamy realm. Then, all of a sudden, the ground shuddered and the ravines echoed with a deep drone as ice blocks broke loose and tumbled down the slopes in a torrential rush. I blinked in disbelief, but it was all real. A combination of thawing ice and gravity created avalanches and a continually changing “waterfall”.

As the deluge of ice blocks hit the ice-covered stones protruding from the cliffs, they shattered violently and transformed into a geyser of mist that obscured the entire ravine. After the avalanche, the sky restored to its azure self, and the entire vale returned to peacefulness. The new Great Ice Waterfall lay tamed and once again charmed the eyes.

1. Moraine stone in Conch Gully
2. In the fantastic world of ice and snow (by Liu Qing)
3. Campsite Three (by Zhang Jinneng)





Tips for the Traveller

Conch (Hailuo) Gully lies on the eastern slope of Gongga Mountain in Luding County, Sichuan Province. Known as the "King of Sichuan Mountains", the Gongga rises 7,556 metres above sea level. Conch Gully has the largest and most picturesque of the over 70 glaciers there. The end of Conch Gully Glacier lies 2,850 metres above sea level, 1,850 metres below the snow line of Gongga Mountain and extends six kilometres into the forest. Nowhere else in this world can glaciers be seen coexisting with forests in such a congenial fashion.

Spring and autumn are the best seasons for a tour of Conch Gully. You may catch the long-distance bus at Chengdu and travel west for 349 kilometres along the Chengdu-Lhasa Highway to Moxi Town by way of Xinjin, Ya'an and Luding. You may also take the train in Chengdu and transfer to the long-distance bus at Wusi Railway Station before proceeding further to Moxi Town. You can also join a local tour group bound for the gully. There are three campsites in Conch Gully, and the local restaurants serve such specialties as duck stewed with Chinese caterpillar fungus, chicken cooked with fritillary bulb, and buttered tea. As the annual temperature on the mountain averages 5°C, so bring along warm winter clothing. Cotton-padded coats are available for rent at the campsites.

While in the glacier park, carefully follow the marked routes. Hire a guide if you want to see the glaciers.

海螺溝冰川位置圖
Location Map of
Hailuo Gully Glaciers







HIGHLIGHTS

The City of Beihai

Sun,
Sand
and
Sea

Photos & article by Iris Wong

Endless Sand - Silver Beach



When discussing the highlights of Beihai, invariably first place goes to Silver Beach, reputedly the Number One Beach in China. Though not everyone will agree with this assessment, this super-beach not far from the city centre, indeed reminded me of Waikiki Beach in Hawaii, the Gold Coast in Australia and even the famous Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In fact, China abounds in holiday resort beaches such as those at Beidaihe and Qingdao, each of which has its distinctive qualities; their drawbacks, however, are that these places are overflowing with tourists. Local people joke that the innumerable visitors in the sea at these resorts are "boiling dumplings" — a reference to the pot being so full you can't see the water! Consequently the wide open space at Silver Beach in Beihai beats them all.

Indeed, Silver Beach at Beihai is a huge expanse since it stretches for more than 20 kilometres from Daguansha in the east to Guantou Hill in the west. It is said to be as big as the beaches at Beidaihe,



Qingdao and Dadonghai in Hainan combined. The Silver Beach Park at the central section of the beach is the main swimming area, accommodating about 100,000 swimmers at a time. Besides, the beach is flat and smooth, the water is clear, the waves are gentle and the area is free from sharks. The average water temperature during the year is 23°C and in eight out of 12 months the water is warm enough for

swimming. Considering all of these factors, it is not hard to understand why Silver Beach is considered the top beach in China.

If you come to Beihai during the heat of the summer, you will find patches of silvery and fine sand beaches, inlaid with rows of colourful sun umbrellas, stretching away into the endless distance. Swimmers glide on the waves or float leisurely, caressed by the placid waters. Coconut groves and other greenery further enrich the atmosphere of the beaches, and, along with the shower rooms, restaurants and hotels in the shape of boats, mushrooms, Mongolian yurts or castles spread



out along the beaches, create an ideal holiday spot.

While we were there, apart from swimming and sunbathing, we also spent a great deal of our time enjoying ourselves sipping cold drinks in the open teahouse on the beach. Some of my more energetic companions found jet-skis and speedboats more exciting. Others opted to ride camels or horses. Riding camels here particularly gives you the feeling of travelling in a real desert. Group activities included beach volleyball and football games. There were also many visitors building sand castles, taking pictures or catching crabs. We heard that sometimes people also play beach golf and did parachuting here. Sightseeing flights will soon to be introduced.

Needless to say, restaurants and food stands offer a wide choice of seafood delicacies. A great many shops always try to push locally made souvenirs to tourists, such as jewellery and decorations made from sea shells or pearl necklaces. At the beach, you will certainly have no difficulty in finding food and leisure activities. So it's no wonder that even at dusk, there were still crowds of people heading to the beach.

Near the park there are other swimming areas such as the Seaside Park and the Qiaogang Town Coastal Tourist Zone with less expansive beaches. The Qiaogang Town Coastal Tourist Zone, however, has plenty of modern hotels, such as the Sea Pearl Hotel and the triangular Liu Hai Hotel, that attract many visitors with their unique architectural styles and quality services.

Previous page: A day off for the fishery girls on Weizhou Island

1. Silver Beach in twilight (by Hu Yongchang)
2. Leisure on Silver Beach
3. Silver Beach — the No. 1 beach in China (by Xie Guanghui)
4. Riding a camel at Silver Beach is like travelling in a real desert.
5. Silver Beach is a major attraction to tourists in Beihai.



North Vietnamese

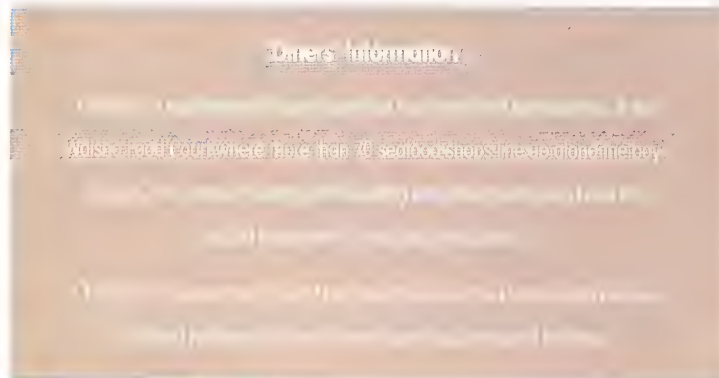
Approved by the Ministry of Culture, Information and Sport
 Hanoi, Vietnamese People's Republic
 1980
 Printed by the Ministry of Culture, Information and Sport
 of the Vietnamese People's Republic
 Hanoi, Vietnamese People's Republic
 1980

Every Day a **Seafood Special**

The locals are said to eat seafood everyday. It seems natural for visitors to follow the dietary customs of the local people.

There are numerous places in Beihai to try seafood. In fact, even street vendors sell deep-fried fish, shrimps and crabs, which confirms the special fondness local people have for sea delicacies. More importantly, the food here is quite inexpensive, particularly compared to that in Hong Kong. Apart from lobsters, every choice is a good bargain.

Many of the foods are unique to Beihai, such as the many varieties of conches — red, fragrant and sand, each having a distinctly different flavour. As for spinculoids or sandworms, if you can forget what they are and boldly savour a taste, you will be rewarded with refreshing flavours. And, maybe, they could become one of your favourite foods whenever you visit Beihai.



Waisha Food Court where more than 20 seafood shops line the waterfront.



1. Enjoying seafood in Beihai
2. A variety of seafood is sold at food stalls.
3. Business is flourishing at Waisha Food Court.
(by Xie Guanghui)



Invariably, whatever you buy in Beihai comes from the sea, be it a shell necklace, a house decoration, a mini-desk screen, a small box or a "shell painting". Shell paintings are not painted, but instead made by arranging different kinds of sea shells into images such as human figures, mountains, rivers, lakes, flowers, birds and animals. Such a design creates a unique three-dimensional image.

Coral handicrafts, whether processed or remaining in their natural state, are ideal decorations for the home and the aquarium. Their many different colours offset each other, attracting attention as well as provoking the imagination.

Hepu County of Beihai is a great producer the famous South China Pearls. Visitors are often surprised at the elegance and quality of the pearl jewellery produced here. Walking the streets of Beihai, you will certainly come across vendors selling pearl necklaces, earrings, bracelets and rings. You may also find medicinal products or cosmetics made from pearls, such as powders, tonics, creams and even eye drops.

Shopping for Marine Handicrafts

1. Shells are the favourite of tourists.
2. Pearl jewelry
3. A corner of a handicrafts market

A Tour to Weizhou Island



There is a saying that, "Unless you've been to the Weizhou Island, you haven't been to Beihai." Consequently, many visitors have great expectations and curiosity as they head off to Weizhou Island.

Weizhou is a weekend holiday spot that combines a primitive Oriental flavour with a sense of the Western life-style. Located about 36 nautical miles southwest of Beihai City, this island and another one called Xieyang about nine nautical miles away, are respectively referred to as the Greater and Lesser Penglai (Penglai is a reference to the name of a place for immortals). About 25 square kilometres, Weizhou is Guangxi's largest island and also the largest volcanic island in China; it was formed approximately 10,000 years ago by several eruptions. The island, being covered with soft sand, is a sun seeker's paradise. The wide range of bizarre, natural caves and rocks eroded by the sea, as well as traces of volcanic eruptions render the island its reputation as a "geological museum".

All our way on the ferry to the island, the wind was strong, and the sea was rough. Passengers could not disembark at the pier so everyone had to load into smaller boats to get ashore. These small boats, however, could not directly reach the beach, but had to cast anchor near the shore. The passengers then, one by one, jumped into

the shallow waters and waded their way to the shore. Several ladies objected and had the boat owners carry them to the shore. It was an unforgettable start of our Weizhou tour.

Reminders of Greece

Despite the strong wind and huge waves on the sea, the island was strangely calm with fine weather. I took a motorised tricycle to the



island's central district along the coastal road. The wide beaches and the deep blue water brought back wonderful memories of riding a motorbike on a Greek island. The bay was also similar, packed with yachts, but here they were of both Chinese and Western styles.

The central district on the island is near Nanwan Harbour, which is a beach lying at an indentation at the southern end of the island. Free from pollution, it is the best place to swim. The streets, lined with shops, hotels and restaurants, are all very narrow. It is easy to find a seafood restaurant near the sea. Apart from aquatic produce, the island is awash with bananas, peanuts and pineapples. Taking a walk anywhere, you can find ripening fruits on the tree. We bought a large bag of bananas weighing several kilograms at a very modest cost. Later we even traded a half plate of chicken for two large bunches of bananas — amazingly the banana vendor was totally satisfied with the exchange!

Out of the central district and further north is the Heavenly Mother Palace. Built in 1738 in front of a huge crag, the temple faces the sea. There is also a dormitory for the resident monks. A huge natural cave with a large roof opening to admit sunlight, it shields the residents from

the rain. One of the residents assured us that it was cool in summer and warm in winter.

Bidding good-bye to the monks, we went to the Penglai Hotel on the hill by tricycle. On the way, our route was blocked by a herd of black and white sheep, tended by a shepherd riding a bicycle, a scene reminiscent of New Zealand.

The 'Piglet' and the 'Crocodile'

In a bird's-eye view from Nanwan Harbour, you can see a green islet in the bay that resembles a suckling piglet, thus, the so-named Piglet Islet. Across from it are some hills also covered with green

vegetation resembling the head of a crocodile, referred to as the Crocodile Range. Facing each other, they form an odd pair.

Taking a walk through the centre of the island that evening, we suddenly discovered tables and chairs as well as sound equipment just about everywhere. Residents and tourists alike were drinking tea and singing karaoke in the open teahouse, drowning the island in laughter and song. Indeed, it was unexpected fun on a little island.

Early the following morning we went to Piglet Islet. At low tide, a stone dike linking the islet with the big island revealed itself. The dike, made of volcanic stones of all sizes and shapes, was extremely rough on our feet. Despite this, many people were there picking up shellfish and conches.

After about half an hour of difficult walking, we finally came to the foot of the Piglet Islet and found that at close range it did not look like a suckling pig at all. What attract people the most here are the strangely-shaped cacti growing among the rocks. Huge waves beat against the rocks continuously. After returning via the dike and viewing Piglet Islet from Tortoise Cave, we found the small island to be another shape again.

Then we hired a car to go to Dishui Village on the western side of the island where the village roads were lined with groves of banana trees. The villagers were either mending their fishing nets or sleeping in hammocks. In the bay outside the village was a suspended rock about 10 metres off the ground looking like a human silhouette gazing out to sea. On top of the cliff, spring water oozed out of cracks in the rocks and drops down, giving the site the name, "The Water Dropping Goddess of Mercy". This island is, in fact, full of peculiar rocks and crags. Many striking scenic sites have given rise to descriptive names and stories.

A Western Style Church

Weizhou Island carries imprints of both Chinese and Western cultural influence. In the ancient villages, for example, you may find Western-style churches built at least a hundred years ago. At Shengtang Village in the northeast part of the island there is a Catholic church built by French missionaries. Traditional Chinese carts pulled by oxen passing by and the typical Western building form a sharp and picturesque contrast. In nearby Chengzai Village there is the smaller church of St. Mary.

Outside Shengtang Village there is a long beach called Shell-Picking Beach, regarded as a twin to Silver Beach. Despite its enormous size, Shell-Picking Beach was completely empty as if it belonged to an individual family. Precisely because of its solitude and unspoiled beauty, this beach would impress you as the "beach of your dreams". At low tide, all kinds of shells can be found on the sand — cone-shaped shells,



1. Piglet Island viewed from inside the Tortoise Cave
2. Rocks with cloud-pattern veins on Weizhou Island
3. A boy in his family's banana grove, Weizhou Island
4. A church on Weizhou Island





butterfly shells, horse-shoe shells, gourd-shaped shells, and tiger shells which functioned as currency in ancient times, and snails in the shape of helmets of Tang-dynasty generals.

On our third day on the island, we went along the coast of Wanzai Village near the Shipan River. The seashore was pure shale with veins of cloud patterns, which gave the stones a sense of movement. When we saw a fisherman haul up more than 20 loaches, we bargained with him and had another hearty meal.

In the afternoon, we visited Ox Nose Bay where two inter-linked stone caves are just like the two nostrils of an ox. Around the 7th day of the 7th lunar month, spring water comes out of the cave and many villagers come here to get the "sacred water".

Returning from the caves, we could see Xieyang Island in the distance. The isle of only slightly more than one square kilometre in size is inhabited by dozens of families who make their living fishing and farming. Those who have been there say it is really an isolated place. The whole island is quiet, covered with thick, sturdy trees. The cacti blossom with bright yellow flowers and the waters are as clear as a mirror. No wonder there are people who want to buy the island! Unfortunately, the rough seas made it impossible for us to visit at this time.

We were ready to leave Weizhou Island on our fourth day, but the huge waves cancelled the shuttle ferry service. Consequently we had time to swim and sunbathe on Shell-Picking Beach. The water is crystal clear there; according to the residents this is due to the corals that grow about eight to nine metres below the sea surface. On fine days, you can see the corals while snorkeling. Local authorities are making plans to develop coral viewing tours.

Ferries were finally able to resume service on our fifth day. As the choppy waves tossed the boat about, our seasickness created an unforgettable exit from Weizhou Island.

Wanzai Village

Wanzai Village is located in the north of Weizhou Island, about 10 km from the island's capital, Weizhou City. The village is a small fishing village with a population of about 1,000 people. It is a typical coastal village with a beautiful view of the sea. The village is famous for its shell-picking beach, which is a popular spot for tourists. The beach is made of pure shale with veins of cloud patterns, which gives it a unique appearance. The water is crystal clear, and the view of the sea is beautiful. The village is a good place to stay if you want to experience the local life and enjoy the sea view.

Previous page: Shale rocks in strange shapes can be seen everywhere on Weizhou Island.

1. A fishing harbour in Beihai (by Xie Guanghui)
2. Rocks on Guantou Hill
3. In a fishing village (by Xie Guanghui)
4. A watchtower at the Town of the Outlaws of the Marsh
5. The beautiful setting of the Town of the Outlaws of the Marsh
6. A panoramic view of the Star-Island Lake



The interior of Beihai has the look of a modern city. The fishing harbour and villages along the seaside, however, are permeated with an extremely strong sense of plain and simple sea-faring lifestyles. It is indeed a sharp contrast.

Qiaogang Town near Silver Beach is the largest fishing harbour in Beihai. The place is home to several hundred large fishing vessels as well as small boats. It is a great spot to see how people live on fishing boats. Besides, Qiaogang Town is a distinctly different coastal harbour because it is home to overseas Chinese who have returned from Vietnam. On the beach, girls from these families sporting large gold earrings are always the focus of tourist attention.

Another site of special interest is the famous scenic area called Guantou Hill some six kilometres west of the city proper. At 120 metres above sea level, the hill is not high, but its plentiful sheer cliffs, ancient caves and jagged rocks give the area a special attraction.

Enormous waves beating against the rugged landscape at the foot

of the hill gave rise to its second name — "Wave Watching Hill".

Southwest of the main peak is a battlement for cannons used during the Qing Dynasty. Though the cannons are no longer visible, ruins of the walls still can be seen. At Lianyang Cave on the southern slope spring water dribbles down from the ceiling. At the beachhead, there is an ancient temple inlaid into the sheer cliffs.

All around there are strangely-shaped rocks. One of them is called the Ferocious Lion Rock and next to it is something resembling a lion cub, called Baby Lion Rock. Together they seem to sit and roar at the sea. The tide had just gone out and many people were digging for snails and shellfish. Young people in love talked intimately while strolling along the seashore, adding life to the seaside scenery.

Guantou Hill is also a particularly good location for viewing the thick white fog that rolls in off the sea and shrouds the coastal hill tops in the summer.

Village and Cliff — Seaside Attractions

A Village in Star Island Lake

About 52 kilometres northwest of Beihai City proper and about 24 kilometres from the county town of Hepu is a reservoir now called the Star-Island Lake, where the water surface is dotted by more than 200 isles. The reservoir was built as part of an irrigation network when a dam was erected on a river in 1959. When the reservoir was completed, small hills were either submerged or encircled by water. Relatively tall hills now stand out above the surface of the lake water.

At the Star-Island Lake Holiday Zone, we boarded a leisure boat for a cruise. The lake is pure green in colour. Years ago people used to drink the water as a natural mineral drink. During fine, sunny days, the green hills surrounding the lake seem even greener. The boat sailed onwards, shuttling from one green island to another. Time permitting, you could call at every island and ascend every hill that used to be a mountain peak. Some of these islands provide homes to various species of birds and black monkeys.

The lake water also flooded a general's tomb on one of the hills. It is hard to tell for sure which ancient general was the occupant of the tomb, but what makes the site interesting is that when the water level is low, the marble foundations of the tomb pop up above water; but when the water level is high enough to totally submerge the tomb, you

can still make out the contours of the tomb at the bottom of the lake, which adds an eerie feeling to the cruise trip.

Another spot is the movie site based on the classic novel *Outlaws of the Marsh*. Visitors in the boat have to go through three "strategic passes" before they can enter the village. Each pass is guarded by sentry towers linked by a plank pathway. In front of the Righteousness Hall, the main building of the site, an elevated terrace allows visitors a panoramic view of the Star-Island Lake.

There are many buildings and sites erected according to stories in the classic novel in the Town of Outlaws of the Marsh, including the Wisdom Academy and the Yongjin Gate; both can only be reached by boat. There is also a street, called the Suzhou-Hangzhou Street, with buildings reproduced in ancient architectural style. Here you can find the residence of Wu Dalang and his treacherous wife Pan Jinlian, the wine shop owned by Zhu Gui, a grocery store, a blacksmith workshop, a hotel, etc., which give visitors the feeling of being in the real world described in the novel. There are not, however, many visitors. Perhaps those who want to see sites related to the novel have been attracted by another site of the same nature on Taihu Lake in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province.



Seabed Forest —

the 'Red Trees'



A seabed forest? Is it something you see on a diving trip?

Red tree forest? Is it a forest of trees coloured red?

Neither assumption is right. In this forested zone at Yingluo Bay in Shankou Town, Hepu County, the trees are mostly submerged in water during high tide, leaving only the tree tops above the water surface. These trees, commonly known as the "seabed forest", are tropical evergreens called mangroves. Tourists can take a boat and cruise among the tree tops.

The trees are not red in colour, but the more than 10 varieties of them all belong to the "red tree" family. These plants can grow in the oxygen-depleted silty soil of tidal waters. Young plants are grown on the mother plant, and when mature, they separate and drop into the water, planting themselves firmly in the mud. Several hours later, new buds will grow and new roots will take hold. This is a unique feature of tidal plants in effort to avoid being carried away by the tidal waters. While taking a walk in the red tree forest during low tide, visitors will now and then hear breaking and falling sounds which signal the birth of new plants.

We walked along staircases down to a wooden bridge in the



forest. On both sides of this small bridge were green water plants whose tops stood above the water since it was the high tide. Children who merrily swam in the water tried to hide, quickly moving among the tree tops. Like playing hide-and-seek with us, they climbed onto the

tree tops to tease us and when we had barely focused our cameras, they abruptly jumped into the water again.

We hired a boat at the dock and began to cruise the forest. The middle-aged boatman proudly told us which scientific study teams and which TV stations had come to study or shoot. He said that during his youth, it was easy to catch one or two kilograms of crabs at a time. Now there were so many people trying to catch crabs that few survived. When he did catch some, he sold them rather than eat them. Most residents in the seabed forest zone had turned to raising

shellfish, snails, shrimps and other fishes for a living. He himself, apart from catching and raising aquatic produce, also ran a tourist boat, a sign of the new times.

A Paradise for Animals and Plants

Cruising among the tree tops proved extremely interesting, with birds darting back and forth. Suddenly a large flock of white cranes took off from the trees, followed by several more flocks. We learned that the red tree forest was an open and organic bio-system which provided support for plants and marine organisms, birds and insects, including over 200 kinds of zoobenthos and shellfish. There is also a fascinating fish called "jumping fish" which can jump to the tree tops and then flip safely back into the water, though our search for it was fruitless.

When the boat came to a bank of fine and soft sand, the boatman deftly dug up white-crane snails and in no time he had about 10 of them. These creatures are edible, according to him. There are also small red crabs and tidal crabs in the sand which were easy to catch. During our cruise, clouds filled the sky and rain started. The village girls who had been digging for snails at the water's edge quickly waded their way home. When they saw us taking their pictures, they disappeared in a flash. Upon returning, the little wooden bridge we had crossed was now mostly submerged in water.

When we went to the red forest again the following morning, the tide was receding. Trees revealed their aerial roots firmly struck in the mud, presenting a scene of "labyrinth of tree roots". To get a close look at the roots and satisfy their curiosity, some tourists bravely walked in their bare feet in the mud among the trees.



1. During high tide, only the tops of the trees can be seen above water surface.
2. Village girls heading for home
3. Playing in the forest
4. A young swimmer climbing atop a tree
5. When the tide retreats, the forest looks totally different.



Tips for the Traveller

Transport

Beihai can be reached by air from Hong Kong and many other Chinese cities. Alternatively, you can go by train from either Guilin or Vietnam to Nanning, capital of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and then change to a long-distance bus from Nanning to Beihai.

Accommodation

City area: **Shangri-La Hotel Beihai** (Address: 33, Chating Rd.): double room 500-800 yuan per night; **Beihai Furama Hotel** (Address: 31, Chating Rd.): double room 450-700 yuan per night; **Beihai Guesthouse** (Address: Beibuwan Rd. C., opposite Zhongshan Park): double room 300-400 yuan per night; **Huangdu Hotel** (Address: at the junction of Beibu Bay Rd. W. and Guizhou Rd.): double room 400-500 yuan per night.

Silver Beach: **Shubing Tower**: double room 280-320 yuan; **Fumin Tower**: double room around 280 yuan; **Changqing Tower**: double room 250-300 yuan.

Climate

Beihai enjoys a mild climate throughout the year with an annual average temperature around 22°C, 14-16°C in winter and 28°C in summer. The period from April to December is the best time for travelling.

Other scenic spots

- Standing in the Beibu Gulf Square in the city centre is a piece of creative sculpture named "Soul of the South Pearl" which is composed of giant shells, pearls, sea gods and fairies. The plaza is surrounded by shops selling various goods and is thronged with people even at night, which makes it an ideal place to experience the hustling and bustling night market of Beihai.

- Inside Beihai's aquarium, the Undersea Dragon Palace located in Binghai Park, one can find nearly 10,000 kinds of marine organisms including sharks, coral fish, sea horses and the rare dugongs — the legendary "mermaids".

- In Haitan Park beside Silver Beach, there is the largest steel-sculptured music fountain in Asia. One can catch sight of this giant steel sphere from a long distance away. On the sphere there are wavy patterns and sculptures of seven nude girls — it looks as if seven goddesses are protecting a giant pearl. When night falls, this music fountain installed with 3,700 nozzles and advanced

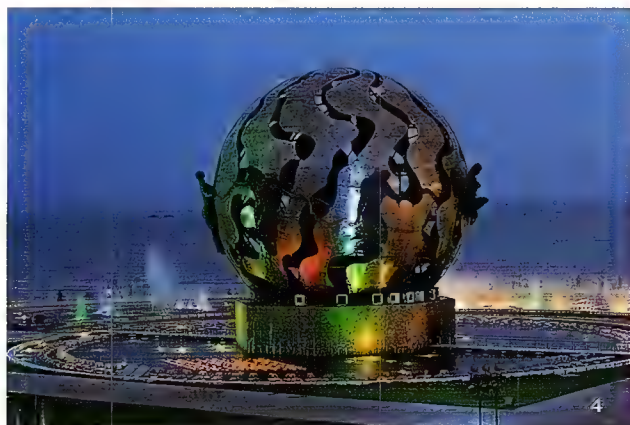
lighting equipment will start "performing". There are beaches as well inside the Haitan Park. The daytime and night-time admission fee are 10 and 12 yuan respectively.

- Not far away from Silver Bay Park there is the Haitai Villa Quarter where villas of Roman and Greek design can be found.

- Opposite Haitai Villa Quarter is Hengli Vacation Centre by the seashore with an extensive Roman plaza and European-style archways.

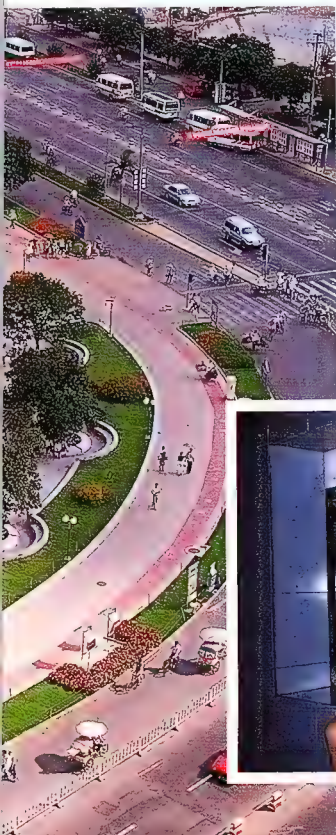


1. The Shangri-La Hotel equipped with an outdoor swimming pool
2. You can have a rich night life in Beihai. (by Xie Guanghui)
3. Beibu Gulf Square in the city centre (by Hu Yongchang)
4. The Music Fountain inside Haitan Park (by Xie Guanghui)
5. Inside the aquarium
6. A teahouse at a shopping centre





北海市旅遊圖 Tourist Map of Beihai



涠洲島
Weizhou Island



廣東省
Guangdong Province

THE MING IMPERIAL WAXWORKS PALACE IN BEIJING



*Photos by Shan Xiaogang, Tan Xiande
Article by Shan Xiaogang*

I HAD LITTLE CURIOSITY IN WAXWORKS, BECAUSE I THOUGHT WAX FIGURES WERE USUALLY DRY, UNNATURAL AND LIFELESS. NOR DID I

EVER BOTHER MYSELF TO LOOK AT A WAXWORK TO SEE IF IT IS A GOOD PIECE OR NOT. BUT THAT WAS BEFORE I VISITED THE MING IMPERIAL WAXWORKS PALACE IN CHANGPING IN THE SUBURBS OF BEIJING.



A 'REAL' LOOK

The Waxworks Palace has 26 scenes and 374 historical figures. The first scene depicts how Zhu Yuanzhang, the founding emperor of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) joined the army. During my visit, the guide reminded me the hair on the head of Zhu, who was then a monk on his way to join the army, was real. A close look revealed that, sure enough, the short hairs had clear roots as if they were growing naturally. The guide reported that the hair of all the different wax figures in the palace was actually real human hair, planted by hand, one by one. After such an introduction, I could not help admiring the conscientious attitude of those wax sculptors.

I was even more amazed by the accuracy of the oriental-coloured skin of the figures. Even the bulging muscles and bones beneath the skin looked so real. But what surprised me most were the hands — the loops and whorls on the fingers, the calluses on the palms and the veins on the backs of the hands — they were so authentic that it was hard for the visitors to believe that they were



1. It's not real! It's a wax figure.
2. Posing for a photo in front of Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang.
3. In the scene "The Absurd Emperor" (Photo by Tan Xiande)
4. Emperor Chongzhen hanging himself on a tree on Coal Hill in Beijing (Photo by Tan Xiande)
5. The emperor devoted to carpentry
6. Visitors showing sympathy for a woman wailing over her dead child



man-made. Many visitors bent over them for a clearer view. While examining them, one visitor even muttered, "Look, these hands are as real as a human being's. I am really afraid that the wax figures will come alive and suddenly raise their hands to slap me in the face!"

As a matter of fact, the most striking feature of the wax figures is the vividness of their eyes. With the lights on, each character appears to have a pair of bright piercing eyes which seem able to penetrate through anything. In the third scene, entitled "Setting up Capital in Jinling", there is a court official, whose eyes are so vivid that timid visitors dare not look into them. While visiting this section, many visitors would suspect that this figure is a role played by a real person!

A 'REAL' TOUCH

To touch wax figures is generally forbidden in waxworks halls, but

I was given special permission here in this palace. As I reached out to shake hands with the emperor, I was so frightened that I withdrew my hand abruptly. The skin was very springy and felt real! It was only too cold to be real. All the figures here are made of a composite of wax and silica gel and other chemical elements. This creates the springy life-like texture, and makes it heat-resistant and waterproof. Based on the status of the characters and the plots of the stories, all the main figures are sculpted at the scale of 1:1 with common folks in the background. They are so truthfully portrayed that some of them even evoke controversy from the visitors. The sculptures of Emperor Wuzong and a country girl in the scene "The Absurd Emperor", for example, are excellent depictions.



A REAL BACKGROUND

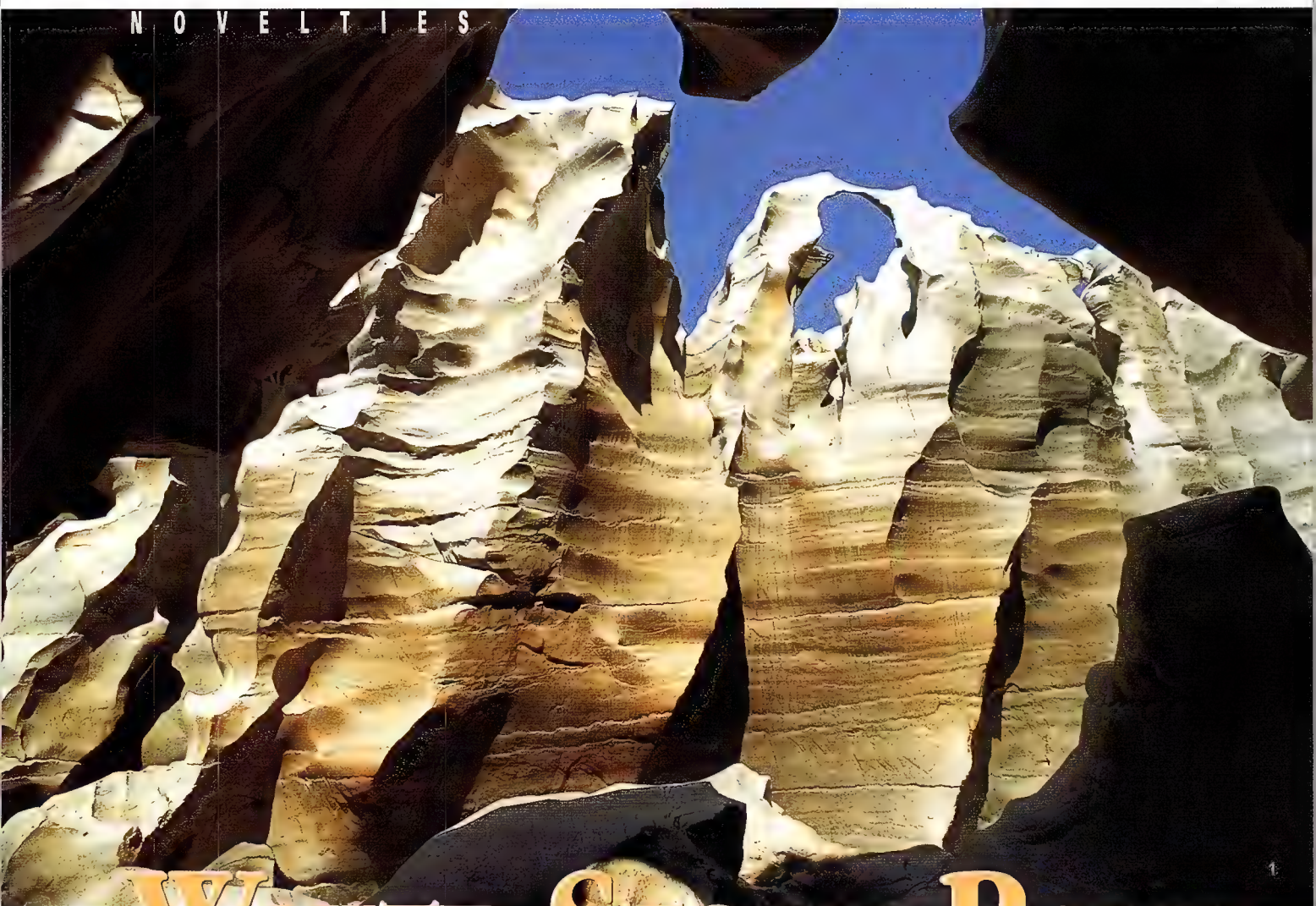
In the Waxworks Palace real props are used to create the atmosphere around the characters. In the scene "Hai Rui Is Dismissed from Office", for example, Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang's chair and screen are carved by a famous Suzhou carpenter, the wooden utensils are made of agalloch eaglewood, and porcelain articles are from Jingdezhen. Everything in the palace, from the beams and pillars of the building to the swords, spears, clubs, antiques and paintings, is real. The pearls and jade objects displayed with the characters are also real. Even the horses are created with real horse hide.

Set by the sound, light and colour, the historical figures drawn in true-to-life form against the actual historical background have a very strong artistic effect. They unfold to the visitors one scene after

another of the history of the Ming Dynasty. After visiting the 26 scenes, one may have the feeling of passing through the rise and fall of the dynasty's 276 years. But, is it real? Yes — real wax.

The Ming Imperial Waxworks Palace is located near the Ming Tombs. Visitors can first take the subway to Jishuitan Station, then walk to Deshengmen to take public buses Nos. 919, 920 and 345 or other buses to the western part of Changping.

1. A Ming-dynasty wine shop
2. The dishes displayed make visitors' mouths water.
3. A fierce battle
4. Emperor Xiaozong inspecting the countryside (by Tan Xiande)
5. This wax figure is so lifelike that it is hard to find the difference.
6. A Beijing street scene in the Ming Dynasty



WHITE STONE BANK

Photos by Wu Ping Article by Huang Yanhong



A Natural Water-crafted Marvel

Butuo in Liangshan, Sichuan Province, is a place well-known for its "fire". The annual Torch Festival not only draws thousands of the local Yi, one of the ethnic minorities in China, but also attracts countless Chinese and foreign tourists as well as artists from many other parts of the world. I had the honour of attending it twice and went away greatly impressed each time.

The occasion is so grand and lively that mere words cannot describe it. The crowds become jubilant even before the torches are lit, when activities such as

horse racing, bull and sheep fights, wrestling, and beauty contests take place. A most unforgettable event was the Dati Dance. Around a large bonfire, hand in hand, I danced the night away with the local Yi girls; although I did not have any of the plentiful wine, the festival atmosphere itself was intoxicating.

It was only recently that I heard there is also a marvellous natural phenomenon, surprisingly, crafted by water in Butuo. It seems very odd indeed to have two natural forces that are diametrically opposed — fire and water — come together like this in one place, each in its own way spectacular.

Winter Unveils the Riverbed's Wonders

The thundering Jinsha River (the upper reach of the Yangtze) provides the site for the water display. In the summer it surges with violent waves and swells along its course, filling the deep valley with a deafening roar. It is impossible to have a conversation while standing on its banks. Only in winter during the dry season does the river reveal the strange white rocks hidden deep beneath its gushing waters.

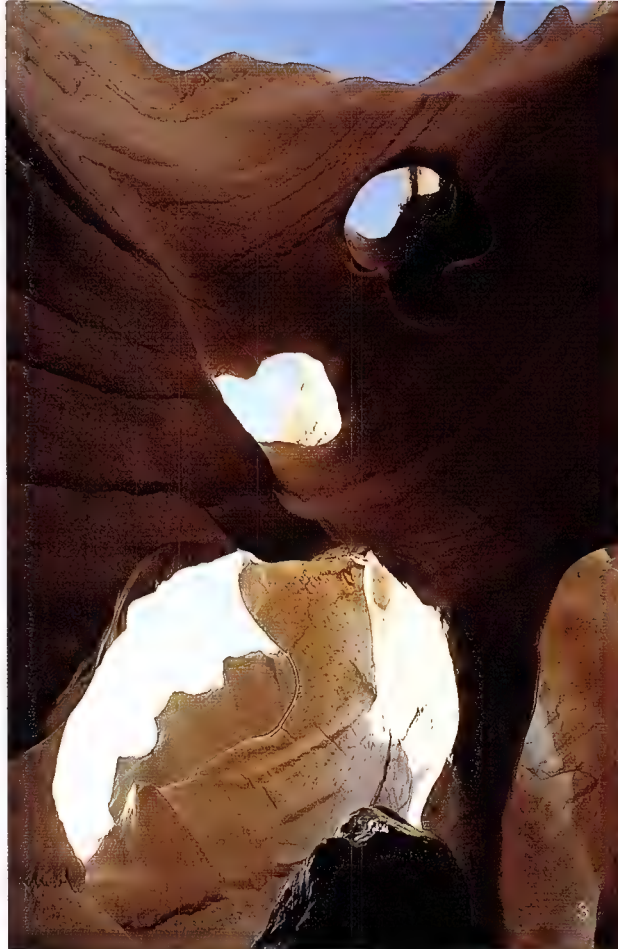
However, to get a view of those rocks is by no means easy. The 80-kilometre road from the county town of Butuo to the banks is very rough and dangerous, especially the latter part. It takes about four hours by a "walking" tractor. Bumping along the narrow, rough mountain road was quite an experience. I wondered if the trip was worth it as I was thrown up and down, my hands numb with the vibrations and my body feeling like it would soon be shaken into little pieces.

The Art of Nature

The natural water-crafted marvel is formed by huge white rocks, over an area of more than 10,000 square metres. Descending the mountain slope, one can see Yunnan Province on the far side of the Jinsha, while this mysterious white

rock "forest" stands like a maze on the Sichuan side. No one knows which came into being first — the massive, odd rocks or the Jinsha River — but under the continuous washing, lapping and pounding of the river's water, these rocks became brilliant white, and fashioned into strange, almost artistic, shapes.

Compared with other renowned rock forests, the white rocks here are more strangely distorted and original; the continuous, rough water flow has weathered the rocks into remarkable shapes with smooth surfaces. They appear like crystal jade carvings or glaciers, with interlinking holes. Looking more carefully, one will find shapes of animals, plants, human figures and monsters. The contours of the rocks are so natural and real that one can easily identify them simply by relying on feelings and imagination.



Translated by Xiong Zhenru

1. Inside the white stone forest
2. Strang rocks on the banks of Jinsha (by Han Yuanhua)
3. Intertinking holes
4. This piece looks like a jade carving.
5. On the other side of the river is Yunnan Province.

Tips for the traveller

White Rock Bank is located in Jiaojie District 80 kilometres south of the seat of Butuo County. Fly to Chengdu, and from there, the train to Xichang takes 12 hours. From Xichang to Butuo, buses are available every day for the three-hour journey. The road from Butuo to the Jinsha River is very rough. There is no regular bus. The White Rock Bank can be seen only in the dry season, therefore it is advisable to contact the local tourism department beforehand.

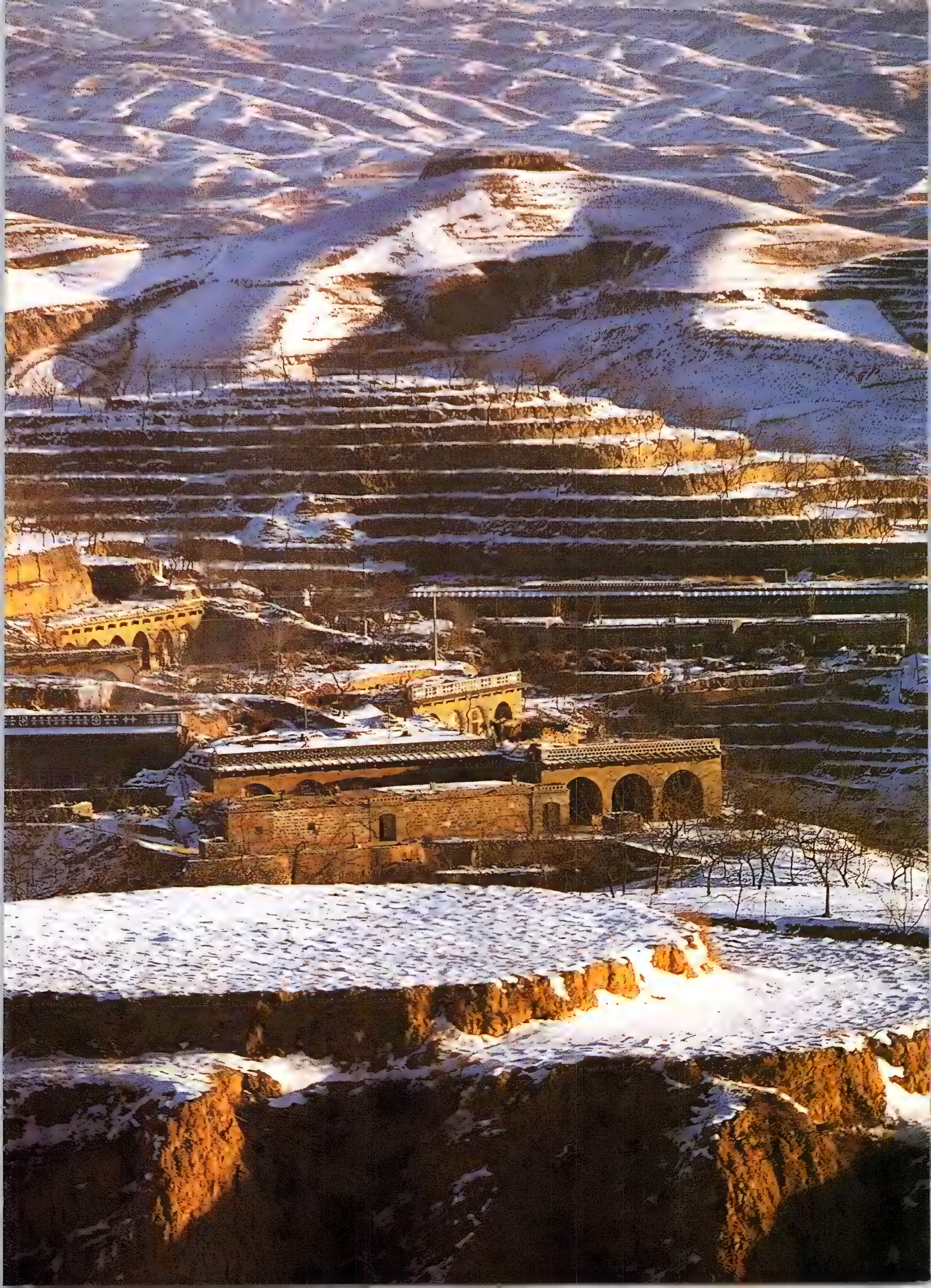


CAVE DWELLINGS

—Homes on the Loess Plateau

A unique type of dwelling — a cave home — is standard for people living on the Loess Plateau in northern China. It originated from caves in which ancestors of the Chinese nation lived. How do people view these traditional folk dwellings now? What do they really look like? Will they soon vanish, or continue to develop? With all these questions, I visited several cave dwelling areas. *Photos & article by Shan Xiaogang*







CLIFF-SIDE CAVES —

Original, Common and Simple

Cave Dwellings at Biandan Gully

Pinglu County in southern Shanxi is well-known for its cliff-side cave dwellings. A local saying claims, "Pinglu is a land of 3,000 gullies." Certainly the sheer cliffs on both sides of these gullies are ideal for digging caves.

On arriving, I heard a country fair was being held in nearby Xiqi Village, the home of Zhou Cang, a courageous aide to Guan Yu, the famous valiant general of the Three Kingdoms Period. Legend says that the Biandan (Shoulder Pole) Gully south of the village was created by Zhou Cang who simply drew a line on the ground with his shoulder pole. The gully was to protect his smuggled salt from robbers.

Early the next morning before the fair started, I walked along the edge of the valley, hoping to find some cave dwellings. Blossoming peach trees lined the edge, and terraced fields on both sides of the gully were planted with wheat and rapeseed. Following the sounds of people's conversation and dogs' barks, I walked on a narrow trail and came to a courtyard with several cave dwellings. Two country women chatted warmly while sorting vegetables.

When I commented to the elder of the two women, Mao Bianying, that they had chosen a very good location for their cave dwellings, she smiled, "What is so good? This is only a gully of yellow earth." The family had three caves, two for the family and one storehouse. Several smaller caves were used to raise animals.

Inexpensive and Long Lasting

When Mao's husband Mr. Shi Wenlong came back, I asked how much money they used to build their cave dwellings. "All self built. Not expensive," he said. It is true that all local people can dig such caves. First, a place on the cliff-side with the right type of earth and without cracks is chosen with two major conditions prevailing: Easy access to water and facing the sun. More traditional families would also invite a geomancer to have a look and choose an auspicious date to start the digging. The family then flattens the vertical face of the cliff and draws the exact positions of the caves. Next, they dig a vertical oblong opening for each cave. When it reaches about two meters in depth, they dig an arched exit and start widening the inside into a semi-circular shape. A wide-bladed pick is used to smooth out the walls, which are then smeared with a thick layer of straw-mud mix to improve their appearance and allow observation of any crack. When the caves have dried naturally, a chimney is built, and doors and window frames installed. As well, the family also needs to dig caves for the draught animals, pigs, sheep and chicken, and make niches to place lanterns and ancestral memorial tablets.

A fairly complicated cave courtyard can take shape in two weeks with enough helping hands. As all the jobs are done by the family, the caves cost virtually nothing, excepting the carpenters' charges for the door and window frames. Mr. Shi said he only spent 70-80 yuan for his

cave courtyard. But, he continued, caves with

quality earth like his could last three or four generations.

Inside their cave, I was invited to sit on the *kang* — the earthen bed. In this region, the heated bed is built in line with, and linked to, the windows at the front of the cave, and is separated from the stoves by a low partitioning wall. Inside are winding flues connected to the stoves and the chimneys through which residual heat and smoke pass to warm up the bed in winter; in summer the flues are bypassed.

The *kang* is the centre of family activities in caves. Meals, chatting, children playing, women sewing, students doing homework and even hosting of guests — all take place on the earth bed.

A Natural Refrigerator

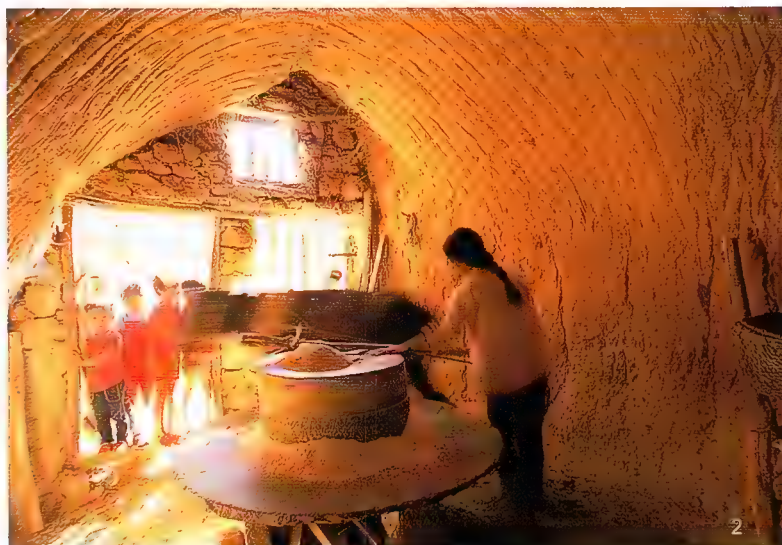
A dozen metres inside the main cave was a smaller cave with an square entrance. Every family has such dark tiny "tail" caves, Mr Shi explained, and with this, he entered and jumped down a hole in the floor. He returned with apples and Chinese cabbages. They felt cool, and I realised that tail caves were actually natural refrigerators.

According to Mr Shi, his cave dwellings were the simplest in the area. In Xiqi and even throughout Pulu County, many families not only dug tail caves and side caves, but dug caves linked with horizontal tunnels. In the old days local people dug a kind of "cave-upon-cave" dwelling for safety from bandits. An ingenious invention and effective defence, the internal design of the caves was so complicated that bandits found it impossible to break in.

Previous page, left: Young cave dwellers

Previous page, right: A village of stone caves in Jiaxian County, Shaanxi (by Shi Baoxiu)

1. A cozy home at a simple cliff-side cave
2. A cave for milling grain





Cliff-side caves
are imitations of
natural caves.



Caves Under Your Feet

Underground (or sunken) caves are created by digging into the four walls of a large square pit or courtyard, itself hollowed out from a flat piece of land. They originated in the Yangshao period, the earliest North China civilization.

It was reported that satellite pictures of such square-shaped underground cave courtyards had sent some military analysts into a frenzy thinking that they were densely arranged rocket-launching pits; a United Nations delegation was even requested to be sent to verify the site.

The underground cave courtyards in Xianju Village are the best constructed. A popular local saying uses the analogy of "going up the mountains but not seeing them" to describe how underground caves can be overlooked. In the village, I saw only blossoming peach trees and simple one-storey houses on a piece of flat land. "Where are the caves?" I asked.

"Right under your feet!" replied Mr. Zhang, my guide, who showed me a large square, deep pit — a cave courtyard. We entered it by going down a dark trough-like ramp, and as I looked back up to where I had come from, I felt like a frog that had fallen into a well. Only a small square of the blue sky remained visible over my head.

"This kind of underground cave courtyard is called *tianjing yuan* — sky-well courtyard — in western Henan and *dikeng yuan* — earthen pit courtyard — in southern Shanxi, while academics call it an underground cave courtyard," Mr. Zhang explained. In the courtyard,

Underground
caves are those
dug in the four
walls of a square
sunken pit.

1. The kang is the centre of all family activities.
2. Building a new cliff-side cave
3. During the harvest season
4. Earth cave dwellings on the banks of the Yellow River in Jixian County
5. The earthen bed is big enough for 10 people.
6. A well in the underground cave courtyard
7. The main and wing caves are linked.



UNDERGROUND CAVES Reflection of Ancient Yangshao Culture

caves were dug into all four walls, two or three on each side. Besides the caves for the family and the domestic animals, there were others serving as the kitchen, storeroom, firewood chamber, and toilet, all neatly arranged.

Suddenly, a motorbike brought Mr. Zhao, the owner, directly into the courtyard. He politely invited us in. As he did so, I asked, "Your yard is enclosed in all sides like a bucket. What happens during heavy rains?" Mr. Zhao laughed, "We have a seepage well over in the corner of the yard to collect the rain water."

The Loess Plateau generally has little precipitation and often suffers from drought. Most times, the rainfall is barely enough to dampen the dust. The seepage well is 10 to 20 metres deep; its water is kept for use during a serious drought. Drinking water comes from another well.

The flat land above the principal caves is used for drying produce. The ground tilts down from front to back to drain rain water and protect the caves as well. An interesting innovation was that the Zhao's silo cave was linked directly with the drying ground above by a small shaft.

Keeping Grain Wholesome

In the cave courtyard, Mrs. Zhao took out hot steamed bread from an exceptionally deep iron pot, said to be big enough to prepare 50 kilograms of steamed bread at one time. "Perhaps it is due to the nature of the cave earth," she said, "not only do people here live longer, but all kinds of grain can also be stored in the caves for a dozen years without becoming mouldy." She also said that the best bread was made with newly milled flour. And indeed the bread she handed me did taste delicious and different.

The Zhao's living room, a major cave facing south, was exceptionally deep,



extending over 20 metres. It was spacious and comfortably cool; in fact, the deeper inside, the cooler the room is. The cave's temperature is virtually constant. In summer, the temperature difference between inside and outside can exceed 20 degrees; in winter it is comfortably warm inside the cave.

The stove was linked directly with the flue which, apart from letting out the smoke, served also as a ventilating duct. Moreover, above the cave door was a ventilation hole the size of a bowl which remains open all year round to let in fresh air.

Mr. Zhao said that the only major inconvenience in cave dwelling was dampness. Usually, after a underground cave yard is constructed, it is left open for up to four years before the family move in — to let the caves as well as the yard pit dry up naturally. The entire digging job is completed by the family members in the slack farming season. Though it is time-consuming, the cost is low. A

medium-sized underground cave courtyard costs only about 1,000 yuan, but it may last over 100 years.

1. Channels for reaching out
2. Outsiders can hardly see a house in a underground-cave village.
3. The caves where Mao Zedong once stayed when he was in Yan'an
(by Yang Yankang)



Affluent People No Longer Live in Such Homes

Although cave dwellings have many advantages, people now prefer newer and more stylish homes. As well, cave homes seem to be symbols of primitiveness and poverty. The younger generation have gradually moved into brick-and-tile houses. In some places, cave dwellings are gradually vanishing.

Even in Pinglu County, some people could not understand why we took such great interest in cave dwellings. "Why are you shooting pictures of these earthen caves?" they asked. "Now, affluent people do not live in them any longer."

Yet, in northern Shaanxi, cave dwellings are still much appreciated by local people. Although new earthen caves are no longer dug, the cave-style stone houses are rapidly increasing.

On the way from Yan'an to Yulin, new cave dwellings of bricks or stone could be seen everywhere on the mountain slopes on both sides of the highway. In Yan'an, the "city of caves", as well as in Ansai, Zichang and Mizhi counties, a great number of large compounds of stone cave dwellings, looking like modern terraced buildings, have been built. Row upon row of caves built with stone or bricks neatly line the mountain slopes and valleys like bustling beehives.

Cave Dwellings with Modern Amenities

Stone cave dwellings are those cave-style houses built with bricks, stone or sun-dried mud bricks. In northern Shaanxi, the cave dwellings were mostly built with stone. Wang Xihe, a middle-aged farmer, described the advantages and disadvantages of various cave dwellings, "Earthen (cliff-side) caves are easy and inexpensive; anyone can simply dig a hole into the cliff side, but they do not last long. Underground caves take up too much useful land. The caves built with stone last a longer time, and provide ample light. People call them 'caves for immortals'. Yet, they require the most money and time."

On entering a stone cave, its brightness is immediately evident. They are uniquely spacious, with big doors and windows to let in sunlight. Moreover, the stone caves are durable, warm and insulated against heat and radiation while keeping out wind and dust.

What formalities are required for local people to build these cave



STONE CAVE DWELLINGS — the Most Convenient and Most Promising

dwellings? One evening, I interviewed Mr. Cui Shixiao, the official in charge of land in Dingxian Town, Suide County. He said, "Really there are few formalities for the farmers. But, as the cave dwellings occupy land, they must file applications for land use. Land is divided into two types, namely, uncultivated and cultivated. The right of approval for land use rests with the county and township governments, and the fees collected are 300 yuan and 700 yuan respectively." According

to relevant stipulations, each household could only have 230 square metres of land to build houses — enough for three caves and a courtyard of reasonable size. Once the certificate for land use is issued by the government, its holder has the right for 70 years.

However, Mr. Cui said, the local farmers' style was to build first and file applications for approval later. Unless a major offence is committed, the township government would normally give approval.

Girls Only Marry Men with Three Stone Caves

On my return journey, I passed Lijiazhen Village and saw a compound of magnificent cave dwellings there. This attractive compound consisted of six stone caves and three earthen ones. In his late 40s, Li Guangzhong, the owner, had three sons and a daughter, the youngest son was only 10. Not without pride, Li told me how he had saved for over 20 years to build these caves for his sons. The main costs are the stone materials and the fees paid to the plasterers. Li had spent over 60,000 yuan on his six new stone caves. Yet, the trend has changed, he said. A girl would only marry a young man who had three stone caves. So, Li had to keep on saving and building for more years.

A Ceremony for the Completion of a New Cave

In Sishilipu Town, a family was celebrating the "closing up" of its new caves.

As in every nearly-finished new cave, each one had an hole on top called "longkou", or "closing up point" which was purposely left open. Hanging all around were pieces of red cloth, multi-coloured threads, red chopsticks and books, as well as a cloth bag filled with various cereals and another one pierced with seven needles. Suitable printed

red couplets were stuck onto the front of the dwelling. After three firecrackers sounded and music was played, a plasterer threw cereals, crumbled steamed bread, coins and walnuts in all directions while chanting. Another plasterer, draped in red cloth, climbed up to the "longkou", put in the red cloth and quickly closed it with prepared pieces of stone to end the ceremony, indicating that the major part of the construction work had been completed. Then the family would hold banquets for their neighbours and, of course, the plasterers, to pray for peace and prosperity.

Building cave dwellings here is not simple. Apart from geomancy to select the auspicious site, choosing the proper date to start, and preparing the earth and stone materials, the most important thing is the building of the arch. It can be done in three ways: by using timber, by piling up earth in an arch shape, or by using troughs called "baxiangzi". According to Yang, the fees for the plasterers now would amount to 3,000-4,000 yuan per cave, and the total cost for building a three-cave dwelling is at least 20,000 yuan.

Cave-warming Ceremony Held Before Moving In

At dusk, I went to the home of Yang Haoran where his family were preparing for the "cave-warming" ceremony the next evening. Yang's new stone caves had been built for seven years, but the doors and windows had only been installed this year. Everybody was busy since

the family planned to move in the next day.

The new dwelling comprised four caves built of stone and looked fairly gorgeous. The inside walls of the caves were washed snow white. The big timber doors and windows were painted an orange-yellow colour and carved meticulously with various patterns. Bright red and green paper-cuts hung attractively over the new glass windows.

Taking two bottles of white liquor as the local custom demanded, I attended the evening rituals the following day. The villagers raised their cups one by one to congratulate the host. People sang the unique northern Shaanxi folk songs. The last and most important part of the ceremony was eating sweet fried dumplings and stewed mutton. It was a joyous occasion that lasted deep into the night.

1. Some cave dwellings have exquisite wooden windows and doors.

(by Shi Baoxiu)

2. A new stone cave is under construction.

3. Chimneys on top of the caves

4. A home-warming ceremony is going to be held for these new stone caves.

5. A newly wedded couple in their new cave dwelling

6. A ditch is first dug for the building of a stone wall.





Stone caves are
built like one-
storey houses.





Wealthy People Attached to Caves

In the Ming and Qing dynasties, Pingyao in Shanxi Province was known as China's "Money Town" since people here had prospered from their businesses and spent a great deal in building their houses. In this ancient town, all the principal rooms (those facing south in a courtyard) are shaped like stone caves, evidence that even as people grew rich they did not lose their attachment to cave dwellings.

The most extravagant cave-style courtyard was the "seven-room" residence built by the owner of the Rishengchang Bank, who was nicknamed "Millionaire Hou". According to Qing imperial court regulations, only those who had successfully passed the highest imperial examinations were allowed to build residences with seven principal rooms. Taking advantage of his financial relations with the Empress Dowager Cixi, "Millionaire Hou" quietly built a grand residence with seven principal rooms and three courtyards. From the only remaining side courtyard, one can guess the scale and magnificence of the residence in its heyday. The seven-room house, the three-room side house as well as the solid thick caves leave visitors with fine lasting impressions.

Cave Dwelling Decor

The emphasis is mainly on the front of the dwelling, including the doors and windows. For earthen caves, their fronts are smoothed flat and covered with a layer of mixed mud and straw, and the arched entrances are built with flat stones or bricks. The fronts of stone caves have neatly cut stone slabs and a neat row of eaves; their entrances have large wooden doors and windows. After the autumn harvest, red dates and peppers usually hang near the entrances and yellow ears of corn and millet pile up in the courtyard.



CAVE PROFILE

The cave dwellers are also making efforts to catch up with modern trends. The Li family in Diaoshan Village, Suide County, for example, has invested about 300,000 yuan in decorating its new cave dwellings. The caves, which appear spacious and bright, are equipped with all sorts of modern furniture and electrical appliances. The heated *kang*, the centre of family

activities, is furnished with wood boards and decorated with ceramic tiles. The walls above the *kang* are decorated with paintings.

Also on the *kang* are tiger pillows for driving away evil spirits and small carved stone lions for protecting the children. Moreover, there are also folk art works such as lovely paper-cuts, farmers' paintings more or less in the style of Picasso, simple and unadorned clay figurines and elegant needlework.

During weddings and festivals, red couplets, window paper-cuts, squares of calligraphy, door god paintings, New Year paintings and red lanterns make the cave dwellings even more striking.

Cave Dwellings: Stages of Human Progress

Habitats in trees → natural caves → man-made caves in cliffs → bag-like vertical caves → underground caves → semi-underground caves → individual caves

Characteristics of Cave Dwellings in Various Locations:

Southern Shanxi: The caves are rather deep, and the height equals the width; the entire front is often covered in brick, with eaves.

Northern Shaanxi: The caves are relatively shallow, with the height equalling the width. The entire front is often stone.

Central Shanxi: The height and width of caves are the same. The doors and windows are made of timber. There are often eaves and corridors along the front.

Eastern Gansu: The caves are large and high outside, small and low inside, with windows built on both sides of the arched entrances.

Western Henan: The caves appear small and low outside, but are big and higher inside. The entrance and the front are brick, with eaves.



Translated by Li Zhenguo



1. Stone cave dwellings built on a yellow-earth terrace
2. A cave village at night
3. Window decorations
4. The spacious living room inside the cave dwellings of a family in Suide, Shaanxi



Sketch Map of Cave Area

1. Lanzhou 2. Xi'an 3. Zhengzhou 4. Luoyang 5. Taiyuan 6. Yan'an 7. Shijiazhuang 8. Hohhot

Tips for Travel

- 1. Lanzhou: Lanzhou is a major city in the northwest of China. It is a good base for visiting the Yellow River and the surrounding area. The city is known for its delicious food and its beautiful scenery.
- 2. Xi'an: Xi'an is a major city in the northwest of China. It is a good base for visiting the Yellow River and the surrounding area. The city is known for its delicious food and its beautiful scenery.
- 3. Zhengzhou: Zhengzhou is a major city in the central part of China. It is a good base for visiting the Yellow River and the surrounding area. The city is known for its delicious food and its beautiful scenery.
- 4. Luoyang: Luoyang is a major city in the central part of China. It is a good base for visiting the Yellow River and the surrounding area. The city is known for its delicious food and its beautiful scenery.
- 5. Taiyuan: Taiyuan is a major city in the north of China. It is a good base for visiting the Yellow River and the surrounding area. The city is known for its delicious food and its beautiful scenery.
- 6. Yan'an: Yan'an is a major city in the north of China. It is a good base for visiting the Yellow River and the surrounding area. The city is known for its delicious food and its beautiful scenery.
- 7. Shijiazhuang: Shijiazhuang is a major city in the north of China. It is a good base for visiting the Yellow River and the surrounding area. The city is known for its delicious food and its beautiful scenery.
- 8. Hohhot: Hohhot is a major city in the north of China. It is a good base for visiting the Yellow River and the surrounding area. The city is known for its delicious food and its beautiful scenery.

The Yellow River is one of the longest rivers in the world. It is 5,464 kilometers long and flows through nine provinces in China. The river is known for its yellow water, which is caused by the large amount of silt that it carries. The river is also known for its many dams and bridges. The river is a major source of water for agriculture and industry in China. The river is also a major source of water for drinking. The river is a major source of water for electricity. The river is a major source of water for transportation. The river is a major source of water for recreation. The river is a major source of water for everything.



Photo: A local farmer and his horse are plowing the Yellow River.

FISH DISHES IN INNER MONGOLIA

Photos & Article by Shan Xiaogang



and how the leaping fish made my mouth water while sightseeing by motorboat on the Hasu Lake.

The Hasu is a natural lake located on the Inner Mongolian Plateau. Because it has a wide stretch of pure, clear water and abundant grass, plus plenty sunshine all year round, it supports over 10 different kinds of freshwater fish, including black carp, grass carp, silver carp and crucian carp. When cooked, the fish meat is very tender. Few visitors would leave the grassland without tasting the fish of this highland lake.

A dozen or so restaurants on the shore at the quay are specialising in fish dishes. Some of them even had "Fish Restaurant" written on their signboards to attract tourists who loved to eat fish. Some smart restaurant owners simply kept fish in the water and set up stands by the lakeside. When customers came, they just took out the fish from the lake, and baked them on the spot.

Not only the Inner Mongolia mutton is famous, fish from the highland lake is enticing as well.

I will never forget how watched the fishermen catching the lively fish

Unable to resist the enticing attraction, I walked up to one of the waterside stalls and bought a fish to have a taste. It was so delicious that I could not help having another one.

In the evening I arrived at the Jinshan Yuhai (Gold Mountain & Jade Sea) Hotel in the Hasu Sea Holiday Resort and ordered an "all-fish banquet". All the 10 dishes were fish, but each appeared and tasted different from the others. The most famous ones were: Golden and Silver Whole Fish, Two-colour Fresh Fish Balls, Western-style fried fish, Double-tasted Fish Fan, Jade Bird and Silver Thread, Two Swallows Returning Home, Chrysanthemum Fish, and fish cooked with tremella. There were also stewed



fish, fish cooked with pickled cabbage, and fish in sweet and sour sauce. Fish braised in soy sauce was tasty and refreshing, steamed fish kept its original flavour, that cooked with broad-bean sauce was spicy, and that boiled with pepper and ginger was hot and fresh.

Having so many fish dishes in front of me, I hoped that I could eat up all. I really regretted that my stomach was too small, and after having a tiny bit of each, I was full up.

The woman manager of the restaurant told me that while special emphasis was laid on the freshness of the fish, the

size and variety of the fish were also very

important. Different kinds of fish needed different ingredients and were cooked with different methods, ancient or modern, Chinese or foreign. To prepare an "all-fish banquet" more than a dozen different kinds of fish were needed. Moreover, when dining in the restaurant, the customers will be entertained by Mongolian girls with sweet folk songs. The melodious singing, the mellow wine brewed in the grassland as well as the vaulted dining hall makes everybody happily beyond oneself.

The price for an "all-fish banquet" ranges from 300 to 800 yuan. It usually includes 8-10 dishes, but the number of dishes can also be decided by the diner. The best time to visit the grassland and have a banquet like this is in summer and autumn. It takes about one hour to arrive at the Jinshan Yuhai Hotel at the Hasu Sea Holiday Resort from either Hohhot or Baotou.

1. A fish caught from the Hasu Lake
2. Fish rolls
3. Fried fish
4. Double-colour fish balls
5. A meal served by Mongolian girls



Bozhou Sesame Seed



Photos & Article by Shan Xiaogang



Travelling along the Beijing-Kowloon Railway, I visited a great number of food stalls in different places. Perhaps I am fussy, but I did not particularly fancy most of the food they serve. So, an invitation to try something new usually signalled my quick escape.

Yet, my impression of Bozhou in Anhui Province was different. It started first when I was somewhat embarrassed by my wrong pronunciation of its name (the first character looks quite similar to another Chinese character pronounced "Hao"). This false start aroused my curiosity to see what this place, a famous town as far back as the Shang Dynasty (16th-11th century B.C.) and the native home of Cao Cao, a ruler in the Three Kingdoms period (220-280), has to offer.

A walk around the city confirmed how unique it is. Disregarding all else, its big streets and small lanes all lined with stalls making and selling sesame cakes are what makes it different from other places. The stalls are varied in style to accommodate four main ways of turning out the cakes: oven-baked, pot-baked, lightly fried, and deep fried. The most popular are oven-baked. Cakes can be round, square or oblong, either hand-made or from a mould and, the taste varies from sweet to salty, or spicy. They are either covered with sesame seeds or filled with bean paste.

Making cakes in Bozhou is termed "da" (literally "beating") cakes. Local people perhaps think this invites a more lasting impression of their products.

The clay oven looks somewhat like a big white frog sitting on a table. A charcoal fire burns inside the oven chamber. The baker first rolls and kneads the dough on a wooden bench, then pulls it long and thin, adds either sugar or salt, and other spices,

Cakes

rolls and kneads again into the shape of a discus and covers it with sesame seeds. Finally it is stuck onto the inside wall of the oven. High temperatures inside the oven ensure the dough will turn into an edible cake within minutes.

Anyone approaching the stall at this point will be inevitably asked "Would you like a cake?" Crispy outside and soft inside, freshly baked cakes are mouth-wateringly delicious. If one fancies spicy food, the stall owner will cut the cake open like a clam and fill it, according to the customer's demand, with hot and spicy mutton, or stewed beef, or a salted duck's egg, or even fermented bean curd. To eat the cake with a bowl of *mahu* (the local name for glutinous rice congee) or *shatang* (the local name for meat congee or soup) will surely evoke enjoyable memories, better than a state banquet. Moreover, the price is so reasonable — two cakes and a bowl of soup only cost two or three yuan.

What also spiked my interest was the way the stall owners held and used their large cleavers. Not the least ordinary, some measured over 60 centimetres long. They were used like a shovel to turn and move the cakes in the oven or to cut cakes and meat. The way they wielded their knives at times reminded me of swordsmen of long ago.

G

1. Husband and wife in business together — the husband bakes while the wife prepares the dough.
2. Sticking the cakes one by one onto the inside wall of the oven
3. Apart from baked cakes, lightly fried and steamed cakes are also available.
4. Big cakes are cut into pieces and sold by weight.
5. A unique kind of cake — five centimetres thick, and very delicious with sesame seeds added



TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINES OF JILIN



GINSENG

Ginseng is a perennial plant belonging to the genus *Panax*. Its name literally means "man-shaped" — indicating that its medicinal root is shaped like a human figure. Known as the "herb of eternal life", it is a general invigorating tonic. There are two types — wild and cultivated.

Only old ginseng is useful as medicine. But ginseng does not grow old easily. It likes sunlight but not direct. It likes water but not excess. The seeds of wild ginseng only propagate naturally. Wild young ginseng is delicate, with few natural environments suitable for its growth. Thus it is hard to obtain.

Old wild ginseng is very expensive. And the more wrinkled it is, the more pearly knobs it has on its fibrous roots, and the longer its main root stretches, the higher it costs. An old saying goes, "A seven-ounce ginseng is precious; a eight-ounce one is a treasure." An experienced ginseng hunter is said to have found a 500-year-old, nine-ounce ginseng and sold it for 350,000 yuan.

Photos by Shan Xiaogang Article by Lang Yan

Cultivating ginseng requires six to seven years. First, the seedlings have to be transplanted to new plots in autumn. Since ginseng cannot stand direct sunlight, the plots are covered with a shed of branches, straw or a white plastic sheet about a metre high. A seedling grows only one three-pinnation compound leaf, called "three flowers," in the first year. In the second year, there will be a five-pinnation compound leaf, called "the palm". Because ginseng is nutrient hungry and the soil will soon be exhausted, the young plants have to be transplanted to another plot in the second or third year, and the nutrient-exhausted plot has to lie fallow for several years. From the third to the sixth year, the ginseng will grow one five-pinnation leaf every year, up to a maximum of six compound leaves; after that, the number of compound leaves will not increase. It is then harvest time.

There is a vast difference in the prices of wild and cultivated ginseng. A single whole wild ginseng may cost 1,000 to 10,000 yuan while a cultivated one only 8-10 yuan.



There is a popular saying: "As the deer eats a hundred varieties of grass, every part of it is a treasure." Its pilose antler (antler with velvet), penis, womb, tail, sinew, gall and blood are all valuable medicines. The most valuable of them is the pilose antler, which is the buck's antler before it ossifies. As the antler begins to grow, it is as soft as an eggplant covered with a hairy, velvety skin and has cartilage and fine blood vessels within. The antler of a buck four to nine years old is the best in quality and highest in curative value. The deer's antlers grow very fast; after cutting, a new pair will grow out in two months. A buck's antlers can be cut more than a dozen times. The antler is rinsed in boiling water and the blood drained; then, it is dried, cooled and cleaned before it is used as a popular tonic.

DEER ANTLER



The herb lingzhi was popularised by the old fairy tale, *The White Snake*, in which a heavenly white snake fairy stole a lingzhi plant to bring her earthly husband, Xu Xian, back to life. Thus started the people's high regard for lingzhi as a magic restorative tonic.

Lingzhi, a kind of mushroom also known as "auspicious grass" or "immortal grass", belongs to the woody *Ganoderma* genus of the pore fungus family. The fruiting body consists of a pileus (cap), mycelium and fungus stalk. The hyphae of its mycelium are colourless, transparent and grow in branches; they secrete a crystalline substance. When mature, the fruiting body becomes woody with a different lustre. Once it has become woody it has lost its medicinal value. Six types of lingzhi occur, classed according to shape and colour, including red and purple ones. Most of the wild lingzhi grow in the mountains in the eastern part of Jilin.

LINGZHI

1. Ginseng roots are in the shape of a human body.
2. Traditional Chinese medicine stalls in a Jilin street
3. Pilose antler produced in the Changbai Mountains in Jilin is considered the most valuable.
4. Lingzhi, the "immortal grass"

Tradition Lives Among the Baima



The Baima people — there are roughly 12,000 of them today — are regarded as a branch of the Tibetan people. However, in China's rich and varied ethnic mosaic they stand out with a unique culture that is rooted in a primitive form of worship.

Photos by Chen Jin, Zhang Jinlun Article by Deng Tingliang





Left upper: A mountainous area where the Baima live (by Zhang Jinneng)
 Left lower: Every village has its own stone statue of the god they worship. (by Chen Jin)
 Right: Baima women in traditional costumes (by Chen Jin)



Habitats

Concentrated communities of the Baima are found in the boundary area between Sichuan and its northern neighbour Gansu. Five thousand of these mountain people live in Wenxian County in Gansu, another 5,000 in Nanping County, Sichuan, and 2,000 more in the upper reaches of the Fujiang River in Pingwu County, Sichuan. These three counties, bordering Sichuan and Gansu, are close to Jiuzhaigou and Huanglong, world-class nature reserves in Sichuan Province. The Baima people originally lived in river valleys, but with the increased settlements of the Han people, they moved higher up into the mountains.

Farming and hunting are the major sources of livelihood for the Baima, with animal husbandry as a sideline. Until the 1950s, the men spent most of the year hunting in the forests; this way of life established the venerable position of their God of Hunting.

Hunting was in fact a more important source of income than farming, probably because the game provided food as well as hides and furs for clothing. Besides, the Baima people used the valuable materials for traditional Chinese medicines — pilose antler of young bucks, musk, leopard's bones, and bear's gall and paws — in barter for iron tools, ammunition, salt, tea, and women's jewellery.

Food and Abodes

The habitats of the Baima are usually located 1,000-3,000 metres above sea level. Farmland is scanty in the mountains. Many farm plots are well tucked into the mountain; farmers often need to climb down a rope to reach them. The land is often stony and infertile. This, coupled with drought, hailstorms and harsh conditions for domestic animals, keep the farm yield pitifully low. Corn, potato and buckwheat are their staple foods, and their diet is more akin to that of the highland Han. Pickled vegetables, prepared in a unique indigenous way, are indispensable to their dinner tables. The Baima people drink plenty of



The Baima religion remains primitive. They worship the god



tea to make up the lack of vegetable variety.

The Baima abodes are generally built of packed-earth walls and wood roofing. Their environment abounds in a kind of pine whose thick trunks provide sizeable panels for the construction of houses.

Baima women are exquisite weavers, and their woollen and linen fabrics have become sought-after tourist souvenirs.



Religion

The Baima religion remains primitive. Their sorcerers are called Baimu, and those with high moral accomplishments, Laobai. Both titles are passed down from father to son, though they can also be acquired through apprenticeship. The Baimu worship the mountain gods, including the gods of hunting, fire and land, who are considered as ancestors of the Baima. As well, every tribe also worships its own mountain god and his consort.

The bible of the Baima is written in pictographs, borrowing heavily from Tibetan letters. After the demise of the last top Laobai of the Jiaoxi Mountain Village in 1984, no-one could read through its entire text. The best the remaining Baimus can do now is simply copy the pictographs and use them as charms to prevent disaster and evil.



1. A girl wearing beautiful headgear (by Zhang Jinneng) 2. Pictographs of the Baima (by Zhang Jinneng) 3. Belts, an important part of the Baima costume (by Chen Jin) 4. Houses of the Baima (by Zhang Jinneng) 5. Ploughing, the primitive way (by Zhang Jinneng)

of hunting, fire and land, who are considered as ancestors of the Baima.



Uncles on the maternal side are held in high esteem. They have the final say on many things, including marriages of the younger generation and major issues of the family. Meanwhile, aunts on the father's side are also highly respected. During the few days before lunar New Year's Day, the mountain trails in the three counties teem with strapping young men leading donkeys or horses to fetch their aunts for sacrificial rituals held for their ancestors back in their native villages. This shows the trace of the matriarchal society that vanished 2,000 years ago.

Customs

Major Baima hold sacrificial ceremonies with a sorcerers' dance, which dates back to the very early days of the Chinese civilisation. Donning masks drawn with animal figures, the dancers make the rounds of the entire village, from family to family, until they believe they have driven the village's evil spirits into the deep abyss of the mountains. Images of such dancers have been found on bricks excavated from some Han-dynasty tombs.

Uncles on the maternal side are held in high esteem among the Baima people. They have the final say on many things, including marriages of the younger generation and major issues of the family. Meanwhile, aunts on the father's side are also highly respected. During the few days before lunar New Year's Day, the mountain trails in the three counties teem with strapping young men leading donkeys or horses to fetch their aunts for sacrificial rituals held for their ancestors back in their native villages. This shows the trace of the matriarchal society that vanished 2,000 years ago.

Festival

The Baima people spend almost every day of the year working, and rest only during the religious ceremony in honour of their ancestors and the God of Fire on the 14th and 15th days of the first lunar month after the New Year. As a rule, the ceremony begins with the sorcerers' dance at noon of the 14th day. To the accompaniment of drums and cymbals and the booming of guns, the dancers prance and leap in a most animated fashion. The "heavenly gods", wearing pheasant feathers and sheep-skin coats, dangling a large sheep tail at their backs and covering their faces with wooden masks, flail ox tails on their door-to-door visits to every house in the village.

Following behind the procession are a couple of women, who, wearing wooden masks and ancient costumes, masquerade as goddesses — the incarnations of the Baima's ancestors. Every family lights torches, ushers the dancers into the house, and treats them to food and wine. The sorcerers circle in the main room before setting off and immediately in come a trio of actors, their faces blackened with kitchen soot — two parent monkeys and their baby. The

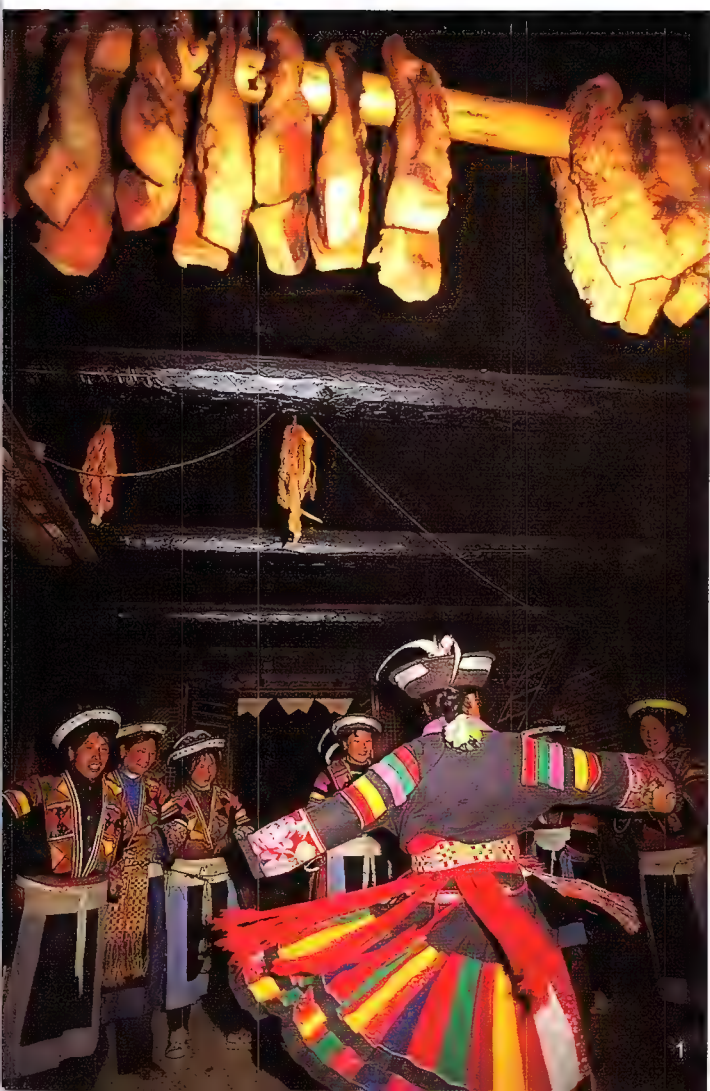
parent monkeys crack jokes about man's reproduction that never fail to rock the audience with laughter, particularly the young women. Before long the monkeys launch into a play entitled *Man's Origin* which ends in seductive embraces and the birth of the baby monkey; the crowd bursts into cheers, and guns are fired in celebration.

It usually takes a day and a half for the sorcerers to make the rounds of the entire village. In the process, they acquire a following that keeps expanding until virtually all the villagers have turned out by the afternoon of the 15th. Even some women villagers cast off their usual self-reserve and drink and sing at the top of their voices.

When dusk has fallen and the dancers finished their rounds of the village homes, they dance around the village in a ritual to oust the evil spirits. The entire village joins in the action. An image of a ship loaded with burning incense sticks and steamed bread is laid out under the village's divine tree in tribute to ancestors and gods; when the sorcerers pass by, they raise it above their heads, and the crowd cheers ecstatically. Led by a man who acts as the three-eyed God of Heaven, the villagers trample through a cluster of bonfires, and expel demons and ghosts away into the ravine outside the village.

At night, in front of the temple atop the mountain, the chief sorcerer, the Laobai, chants incantations for ancestors and the hunting, fire and mountain gods, while representatives of every family await his instruction to light their three-metre-long torches. As a barrage of gunshots shake the peace of the full moon, the men vie to light their torches first. All the while, the villagers progress their way into the farm fields, singing songs in praise of the God of Fire and ancestors.

Teams of torch-carrying people swarm out of the villages and roam the



ay on major issues of the family.



fields, resembling a swarm of fire-spitting dragons descending upon the dark outline of mountains. The revellers then return to the village and toss their burning torches into a large stack of branches in a clearance. The bonfire illuminates the night sky, and the villagers begin another round of festivities. Some dance, and some sing about the adventures of their ancestors. While following their traditions, with the construction of highways and booming tourism, the Baima people are also embarking upon the road towards modernisation.



Translated by Ling Yuan

1. Women dancing at the ceremony (by Chen Jin) 2. A sacrificial ceremony to pray for a good harvest and peaceful life (by Chen Jin)
3. Baima masks are similar to those of the Tibetans. (by Zhang Jinneng) 4. An outdoor show (by Zhang Jinneng)





Editor's Note:

This is the latest adventure of Rebecca Lee, a talented career woman in Hong Kong. The Chinese characters for her name *Yue Shi* mean "music and poetry". Following the call of her own "inner music", she went to Taklimakan Desert, the largest desert in China and the second largest in the world, to float along the Hotan River running through its heart — a challenge few have ever tried.

Lee, who visited the South Pole four times and the North Pole twice, voiced her feelings about her Taklimakan adventure: *"I had learned that Taklimakan in Uygur language means 'to enter but never come out'. In all my previous trips I had faced danger and survived. I put my life in nature's hands. I often tell myself that a calm and peaceful life is not enough, that I need to really communicate with nature to feel the essence of life."*

1. Rebecca Lee
2. Setting off from the riverside near Yurungkax Bridge
3. Hotan River — a gleam of hope in the desert



CHALLENGES

FLOATING ON



3

27 / 7 - 6 / 8

HOTAN RIVER IN THE TAKLIMAKAN DESERT

Photos & article by Rebecca Lee

July 27 Not a Good Omen on the First Day At 2:00 p.m., we put our five rubber rafts into the river at Yurungkax Bridge, Hotan, starting the journey across Taklimakan Desert, the sandy "Sea of Death". Our flagship was named the *SS Young Dreamer* in honour of Yan Jiangzheng's primary school dream of drifting down the Hotan River. The next raft was given the odd name *SS Non-Auto Tyre* after local villagers who, seeing our rubber rafts, exclaimed, "They are not auto tyres."

The current was very swift, at a speed of three metres per second. We nine team members



braved into the current, but before we all settled comfortably in our rafts, the *SS Bell Sound* hit the embankment hard, and Han Weichun was thrown into the water along with his video camera. Then *SS Desert Sailor* struck a shoal, and it took us 30 minutes to shift it. Neither did *SS Young Dreamer* escape — the raft smashed into the embankment's protective iron fencing. Lu Xiaoya used her oar to cushion the blow which then got stuck in the wire, and unluckily, team leader Yan was flung into the water. Before Yan could climb back to the boat, he gave the order: "Go get the oar!". The very worried Lu Xiaoya jumped onto shore immediately to retrieve the oar. No raft could afford to lose such a valuable tool. What an unfavourable beginning we had!

Yan, still in sopping wet clothes, led our expedition down the river for several hours before setting up our first campsite on a beach in the middle of the river.



July 28 *Sleeping on Wet Ground to Avoid Sand Snakes*

It was a fine day with the temperature reaching 39°C. The wind, together with sand, blew in our faces. On our way, we passed Tawakule Township in Lop County and investigated the right river bank where it was being washed away. The three-metre high steep slope was continuously collapsing with large blocks of the embankment falling into the water. No boats dared get near it. It is strange how desert shrubs grow on river banks, protecting the slope and the river, and yet the river water seems to want to wash them away instead of being grateful to them. Less shrubs, more collapsed embankments, then a wider and wider waterway. More and more precious water evaporates in the sun. What a waste!

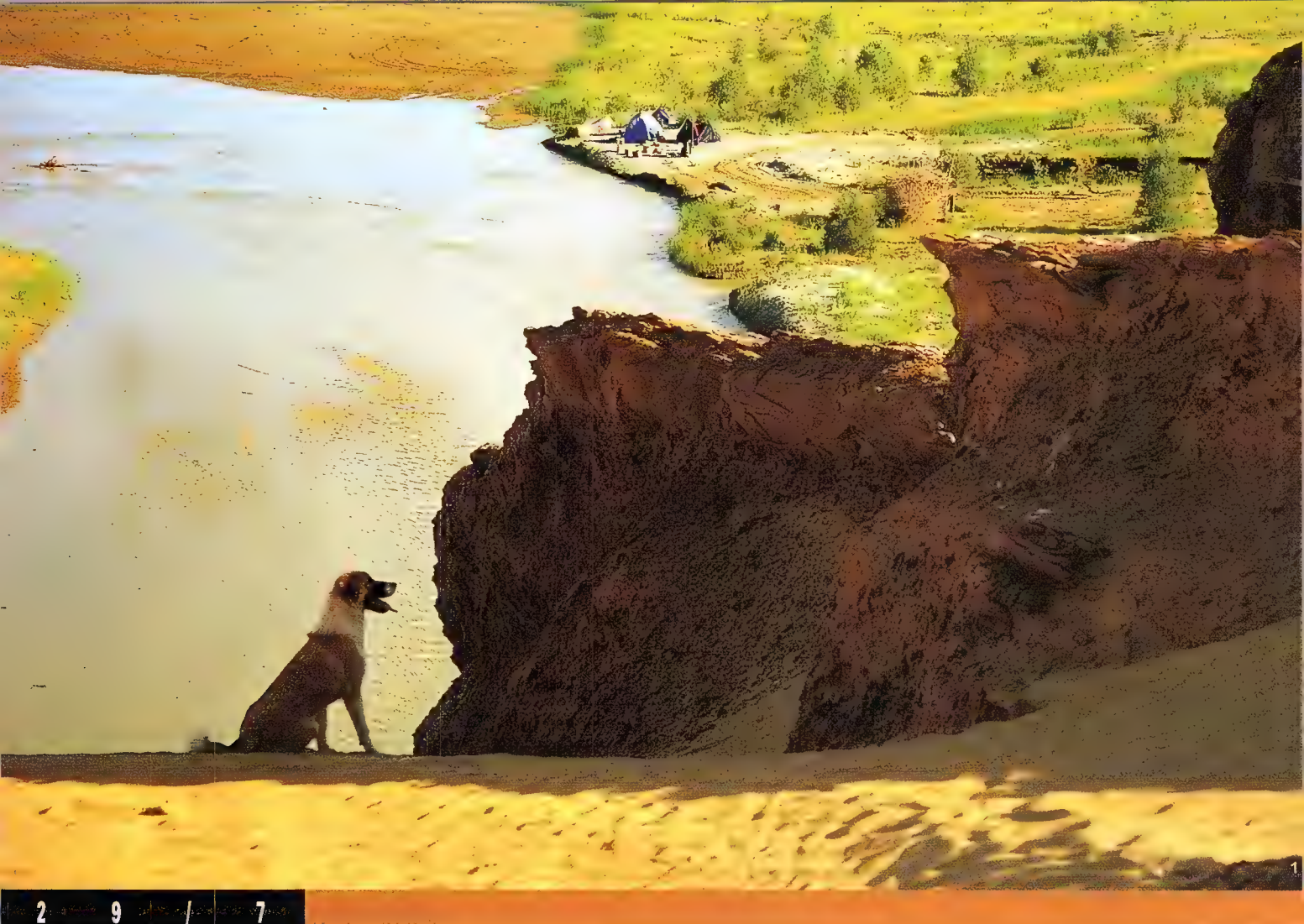
We stopped to set up our camp at 9:00 p.m. The beach was very wet and soft, so it was hard to set up our tents there. The nearby woods were much drier but we dared not sleep there because of the danger of sand snakes. We had no choice but to sleep on wet ground that night.



2 8 | 7



1. Hotan River flows only in summer.
2. Cooking on the beach is a unique experience.
3. The hardships
4. Pulling the dinghy when the river is shallow



July 29 Rule of the Desert: Melon Peels Must Be Saved

Before setting off in the morning, we met a group of people who came from Smawati Township to combat the floods. The township magistrate very kindly offered us four bottles of beer and five water melons — a priceless gift to us.

We had our lunch on the raft — to save time, also because it was not easy to get close to the bank. Although it was only canned food we were still very satisfied. We put ashore at 8:30 p.m. at Aotekaxiti and set up our third campsite. Fortunately the ground was solid, not wet like that of last night, so we could have a nice dry night.

As we all sat in a circle around the fire, we decided to eat one of the precious water melons first. It was quite warm inside when we cut it open but still very delicious. I chucked away the skin after I had finished eating, but our team leader immediately grabbed it and lay it carefully on the sand, the rind facing up. This, I was told, is a custom of the desert. The water inside the melon skin can be saved and when needed it may save a life. (Later, we all followed this local custom every time we had melon.)

At midnight, the embankment about 300 metres away suddenly collapsed, and one of our rafts, the *SS Panpan*, was nearly hit.



1. A loyal guard on the journey
2. Carrying out scientific research

1. The river bed is widened while banks collapsed.
2. Oases like this are not often seen in this area.

July 30 Woken Up by the Roaring Water at Midnight

Today we floated for 13 hours.

At 4:00 p.m. we arrived at the confluence of the two main tributaries of the Hotan River. The two rivers were each distinct: the Yurungkax River flowing grey blue and the Karakax River churning with yellow waves. The wider river was much swifter and it was actually then we had found the real Hotan River.

We mistook a large mountain grove in the distance for Muztag Mountain, and thought we could arrive at the mountain before dusk. But hours later in the dark we were not even close. We went ashore and set up our camp at 10:00 p.m. It was very wet — water squished through the sand as we walked.

At each campsite we stuck wooden stakes in at the water edge to monitor water levels — a simple hydrological instrument as well as a warning sign of danger. We also had a guard on duty checking the stakes tonight.

At 3:00 a.m., the alarm was sounded as huge waves surged in and washed away all three stakes. We all got up to move our rafts.



3 0 / 7





July 31 Facing the Ruins with a Heavy Heart

Getting into our rafts at 7:00 in the morning, the visibility was so poor we could not see anything but mist and fog. It wasn't until noon that the fog dispersed and Muztag Mountain came into view.

Muztag, the only mountain in Taklimakan Desert, stretches about 100 kilometres from northwest to southeast. As we climbed ashore, looking up at the imposing earthy red and rocky white peaks 200-300 metres high, we solemnly remembered that its name translates as "Tomb Mountain". One side of the bare white peak extends down to Hotan River. On the slope of the red peak stood an ancient castle. The ruins of a beacon tower, a dozen or so metres high, took us back to ancient times. Through the surviving walls we could still see that the ancient city had had a glorious past. Amazingly the wood had not rotted at all after 1,000 years. Archaeological studies show that the city was built in the 7th century, and remained prosperous during the Tang Dynasty (618-917). In an archaeological survey in the 1980s, Tang-dynasty coins were found here. It is assumed that the desert claimed it back.

In the afternoon, we met up with team member Han Beisha, who had travelled by road to Muztag. Leaving three members behind to set up our campsite at the ancient castle, we went by a four-wheel drive vehicle to visit an oil drilling team working 10 kilometres away. At this time Han delivered new supplies, including six water melons, a gourd and three cabbages. And the good-hearted oil workers gave us a box and a half of bottled mineral water.

3 1 / 7 - 2 / 8

1. An abandoned earth oven on the desert
2. Starting the cooking fire
3. Camping beside the river
4. Struggling with the waves





August 1 Professor Lu Happily Sharing His Knowledge with Us

Before starting our next journey, I followed Professor Lu on an excursion to gather plant specimens. A respected expert of agriculture and forestry, Lu continuously and carefully

accumulated samples of flowers and grasses, arranging them on pieces of absorbent paper. Fortunately for us, he also liked to share his discoveries, particularly when he found rare or precious specimens.

The now surging river carried us swiftly past the weathered white peak of Muztag Mountain and, thankfully, out of the danger of its falling rocks.

It was 8:00 p.m. before we set up camp on a sandy hill on the left river bank. It was the Army's Day. As four of us had been in the army, we celebrated it with a picnic meal. Professor Lu's outdoor experience came in handy; he quickly dug a pit for the fire and improvised a barbecue with a few stones while some of us looked for firewood, and others washed vegetables and opened cans. Someone invented a new way to get the fire going by using a tyre pump, and soon we were eating — even having beer with our dinner.

August 2 Surging Through 109 Big Waves

The river conditions changed rapidly, giving us different experiences within one day. In some sections, the river widened to several kilometres and the water became so shallow that the rafts could not pass. Then the only solution was to roll up our trousers, jump in the water and pull the raft. On occasions like this, the rubber raft would become as heavy as a dead log. At other times the river surged forward viciously with high waves. At noon today, we had to endure two-metre swells, which bounced our rafts up and down as if monsters underneath the water were playing a game with us. Fastened tightly onto the safety rope we were not frightened; we had been through it all before. The one most at ease was Lu Xiaoya, who listened to her military music *Under the Double Eagle Flag* while counting the waves we braved — all together 109!

At dusk we neared Sven Hedin's oasis, where a century ago, the Swedish explorer was rescued. He had determined the co-ordinates, 39°5'3", with a sextant, an instrument measuring the angle between the horizon and the sun. But now with advanced technology, a GPS satellite location system which receives signals from six to eight satellites at the same time, we could determine the location accurately.

We rowed our rafts with the GPS in hand, reading continuously and waiting for the life-saving site — a pond or something — to appear. When the instrument showed north latitude 39°5'3", someone shouted, "Pull in to shore!" We had found the place where the great adventurer had his narrow escape.

But there was no pond, only sand. We still considered it an auspicious location and, so we set up our seventh camp here.







1. Trunks of dead poplar
2. Ruins of an ancient fortress
3. An ancient beacon tower

August 3 *Sleeping on the Sand Without a Tent* In the morning we made a survey of Da'a Mountain on the left bank, where, sadly, large areas of poplars had died. To the west some poplars still grew along with desert shrubs. Professor Lu made some exciting discoveries, including the Big-flower White Hemp and Taklimakan Red Tamarisk.

Before we set off again in the afternoon, the whole team gathered at the campsite to take photos in commemoration of Sven Hedin. We hoped this lucky adventurer would bless us for the remainder of our journey.

However, no such blessing was forthcoming and instead, disaster struck quickly. The *SS Young Dreamer* sustained a leak so I had to change to the *SS Non Auto Tyre*. Before long, we lost touch with each other. The wounded *SS Young Dreamer* and *SS Bell Sound* disappeared, and the other three floated to a small island where we set up our camp. We elected Professor Lu as our temporary leader. Because all our tents were on the other two rafts, the five of us had to prepare a makeshift tent with a piece of cloth. Overnight the temperature dropped more than 20 degrees, making it very cold sleeping directly on top of the sand. Someone, I could not remember who, suggested sleeping on our bellies to absorb heat from the sands; this turned out to be quite effective.

After midnight, the wind picked up. Sand mixed with the wind, pierced like pins through our skin, even when wearing a scarf. We worried about our friends. Suddenly I felt better, remembering that I had put a few cans of Eight-treasure Gruel in their raft and, some instant noodles; they might not starve.

August 4 *Precious Water Moistens Every Corner of the Mouth* Another day's movement down the river, and still we had no idea what had happened to our leader Yan and other team members. We were all very worried.

Drinking water became scarce and we realised how precious a thing it was in this vast desert. I was rationed one bottle of mineral water each day. Every two hours, I had a mouthful only, first letting the water moisten every corner of my mouth before swallowing. This, I learned, was the way to use water to its maximum. Unexpectedly, water had become as precious as gold.

Without the alum, we could not clean the river water. We had to boil the water every evening and wait till the next day for the solids to precipitate before drinking. Even then, the sand did not all settle out and often stuck between our teeth or under our tongues, but, nevertheless, we had to swallow it.



August 5 Joyful Reunion Followed by Another Separation

At 9:00 the next morning, we continued our travel. At about 11:00 a.m., peering down the river we suddenly saw some black dots. When we eventually approached, someone shouted excitedly, "It's Yan and the others!" After 45 hours apart, we finally found each other again. Emotions erupted and happy tears flowed down Professor Lu's face.

Lu Xiaoya recounted their search for us. Once they saw an empty carton and thought it might have been left by us. When they tried to get ashore, their raft hit several broken tree trunks. Yan and Lu Renzhou, on the *SS Bell Sound*, both fell into the water. When they finally got to the shore and looked at the carton they realised it was not ours.

At about 4:00 p.m., we found a solitary house on the bank. We anchored our rafts there and went in for a rest. We also spent 100 yuan to buy a lamb from the household for dinner to celebrate our reunion.

The evening went badly as disaster again struck our expedition. Four rafts got stranded, and we ended up camping on the river bank right there. The *SS Young Dreamer* could not get back close to the shore and was washed downstream. The same worries came back to us again.




5 — 6 / 8

August 6 The Last Section of the Expedition

The following morning, we all shouted loudly and set off fire crackers, in hope that *SS Young Dreamer* would hear us but to no avail. We continued drifting along the river, in silence.

At 6:00 p.m., we arrived at Xiaota Hydrological Station and found Yan there waiting for us. Our feelings overwhelmed us. Yan explained that after we had parted last night, they could not find any place to anchor and finally at 11:00 p.m. they hit upon a small shoal in the middle of the river, where they spent the night. They could not sleep at all because the water kept swelling up, and so they had to jumping into the cold water every 15 minutes to hold the raft. At daybreak the shoal was barely above water.

We had planned to continue our journey along Tarim River but since the river was flooding badly, we could not even get close to the shore at the juncture of the Hotan and Tarim rivers. We gave up at this point and so, our 450-kilometre expedition on the Hotan River through the desert came to an end. 

1. Great vitality
2. Professor Lu taking very good care of his plant samples



Tips for the Traveller Drifting along Hotan River is undoubtedly a challenging adventure, so one should be psychologically well-prepared before setting off. Moreover, since Hotan River is a typical seasonal river — one can sail on it only during a short period of time in summer — information from the local hydrology and meteorology authorities should be gained beforehand.

One should also be sure to have an abundant supply of all the necessary equipment. Except for dinghies, generators, pumps, tents, water, food, medications and outdoor cooking utensils which are shared by members of the team, one should not forget one's personal necessities such as warm clothing, sunblock, rucksack, sleeping bag, mat, sunglasses, torch, multi-function knife, camera and films.





F O C U S



It is hard to set standards for art.


Whatever can conjure up people's imagination has its own artistic value.



Photos by Li Zhixiong Article by Hua Yu

Bu Nong and His Bells

Though a Japanese friend called them Bu Nong's Brass Bells, the local people call them simply "horse bells". They are plain copper bells that hang around the necks of domestic animals. The wood tab attached to each bell is, as usual, finely fashioned out of Judian timber. But Bu Nong's bells are unique because of the ink pictures he draws on these wood tabs — a most classic finishing touch. • Visitors to Lijiang, Yunnan, are unfailingly attracted to these bells and are often seen wandering the ancient streets holding such bells, clappers clanging everywhere. • Bu Nong is a native of Neijiang, Sichuan Province. He has done all sorts of jobs — worker, farmer, businessman, student, and soldier — and has travelled everywhere, from the Hulun Boir Grassland to the Lancang River, and from Hainan Island to the Taklimakan Desert. A spiritual man, he could walk with wild animals, and sleep in the rough with herdsman. He has eaten preserved pork in the Greater and Lesser Liangshan Mountains, and slept in stilted bamboo dwellings in west Hunan Province, but all the while in spiritual union with the land and the exotic folklore of the people. In September 1995, he decided to settle down in Lijiang, but by November 1996 he was on the road again, alone, in the direction of the Yarlung Zangbo River Valley. • Snow-mantled mountains, buttered tea, food made of roasted highland barley flour, yak farms, old Tibetan ladies — all are sources of inspiration for Bu Nong. Artists always have to be touched by something themselves before they can produce works that others find touching. The first thing to do is to understand life. • What touched Bu Nong most about Tibet was the days and nights he spent roaming about on horseback. The emptiness was traumatic and

although he travelled with two companions, loneliness and solitude were nearly his downfall. The tinkling of the horse bells struck a chord in his heart, and became his salvation. Bu Nong then learned to relieve his unspeakable feelings of boredom — to draw and write on the bells' polished wood tabs. Each of the travellers had his own wood tab around his neck, and at every temple, they made it a point to have the local Living Buddha consecrate them. Though Bu Nong's Japanese friend took his tab back to Japan, the rhythm of the bronze bell remained alive, like music in his ears. • Again Bu Nong decided to settle down in Lijiang. The landscape of this southwestern Chinese city is certainly beautiful, but what really captivated him was its unique religious and cultural heritage and original folk customs. • Bu Nong decided to tell the world of his experience and feelings through his pen. Searching for a suitable medium, the wood tab and the horse bell were first to come to mind. Both the tab and the bell were reminders of the rhythm of the ageless land. Thus, in the streets of Lijiang, a new store — Wayfarers' Shop — was born selling Bu Nong's bells. During his lifetime he has drawn numerous captivating pictures that have found their way to 20 countries and have been reprinted in newspapers and periodicals at home and abroad. • Perhaps it was the unique cultural atmosphere of Lijiang that nurtured Bu Nong's spirit and talent for this unique art. Although it is difficult to set standards for art, Bu Nong's Brass Bells seem a worthy addition to the world of art. 

Translated by Ling Yuan

1. Bu Nong's bells, a favourite souvenir of all tourists to Lijiang
2. Bu Nong drawing at his shop

THREE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS IN SHANXI

Photos by Shan Xiaogang

Most people haven't given any thought to the bank notes in our pocket today; in fact, they did not come into being naturally and have gone through changes with time. Shanxi is a good example.

As early as in the Song Dynasty (960-1279), Shanxi people were well-known traders. In the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties, Shanxi traders widened their range to all parts of the country. Monetary exchange and the circulation of commodities increased rapidly, and businessmen found it increasingly difficult and dangerous to transfer the heavy silver money back and forth.

So some quick-witted big businessmen established money shops to store silver and to issue certificates with something in kind (e.g. silver) as a pledge. If a businessman went from area A to do business in area B, he only needed to take the certificates for silver from A to B, and got paid in silver accordingly. This kind of certificate was, in fact, the earliest cheque. Later, the money shops gradually changed and specialised in remittances and became the earliest form of a bank, called "piaohao" (certificate shop). Not only did traders exchange silver money in them, local governments also remitted taxes and allocated and transferred funds through them. To a certain extent, they played the role of a state bank, making

MONEY CERTI- FICATES

Article by
Shan Xiaogang



2

Shanxi the financial centre of the whole country.

The Shanxi remittance certificates, called "paper money", were printed by the money shops themselves. Each shop had their own vertical bronze or wood cut blocks for printing. The prints were made on paper or cotton cloth in different forms. In an exchange for silver, they were in effect of bank notes — who ever held them could cash



1

them. But the system was not completely reliable due to lack of a credit guarantee from the government. By the end of the Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic, a more complete banking system emerged in Shanxi, and money certificates were replaced by legal bank notes.

Generally, Shanxi paper money takes the following forms:

Circulating Paper Money: Issued with government permission with par value, exchangeable for metal money.

Money Substitutes: Also known as price certificate, wage certificate, purchase certificate, with low par value, used as small change.

Village and Shop Paper Money: Local paper money issued by village or township to solve local financial crises; circulation was restricted and recalled after a certain period of time.

Money Certificates, Private Certificates, Vouchers and Remittance Certificates: Issued by private money shops at the end of the Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic, with face value printed or value to be filled and exchanged for money or silver; reliability depended on seal of issuer.

1. Shanxi "paper money" issued in the early years of the Republic
2. The Qing-dynasty blocks for printing "paper money"

CIGARETTE

TRADE-MARKS

Article by
Wang Wenfu

One day, as I bought cigarettes, I discovered that the packaging had been changed, and suddenly I pondered how the company's trademark had changed over time.

Cigarette trademarks, stamps and matchboxes are the three items collected by common folks in China. The development of the cigarette industry in China in some way reflects the history of the nation.

Cigarette trademarks, including the packets,

papers and names, are rich sources of history. Generally, they are printed in bright colours and exquisite designs. As a small boy, I loved to fold triangles or squares out of cigarette packets to play games with other boys, or use cigarette packets to make planes or swallows. When I grew up, I realised that cigarette trademarks embodied the changes of society. Now, with the progress of time, the precious toys I made in my childhood have become a distant memory.

Tobacco was introduced into China during the Ming Dynasty (around 1573). Because it was imported from a foreign land and had some medicinal effects, it was regarded as miraculous and was given many impressive names in the Ming and Qing dynasties, such as "golden-thread smoke", "vicious grass" and "black tiger".

From the Shanxi cigarette trademarks, vicissitudes of contemporary Chinese history can be traced. In 1937, after their infamous attack on the capital on July 7, Japanese troops occupied Beijing and Tianjin and further invaded North China. On September 8 of the same year, they took Taiyuan and changed the Jinhua (literally Shanxi of China) Cigarette Factory into the Taiyuan Cigarette Factory. The cigarettes produced in the factory, naturally, were branded as "Fuji", "Dawn" and "Happiness", which expressed the invaders' ambitions.

After the Japanese surrender on August 15, 1945, the Jinhua Cigarette Factory produced a series of new brands of cigarettes to commemorate the victory, such as "Victory", "Solitary Life" and "National Skills". Later, a new brand "Zhengtai" was produced to commemorate the building of the first railway in Shanxi. "Sanjin" and "Sanxing" cigarettes were the factory's traditional trademarks, while "Farming Ox" reflects the local customs.



1. Cigarette trademark "Victory" indicates the victory over Japanese in WWII.
2. Some cigarette trademarks are based on Shanxi's scenic spots.
3. Grain tickets issued by Yan Xishan, governor of Shanxi, in 1932
4. "Order for the Provision of Grain", a notice issued by the Japanese regime in China to force the farmers to deliver grain
5. Grain tickets issued by the Chinese Communist Party in the revolutionary bases in North China

With such a large population China has long had a difficult time providing enough grain for everyone. Grain coupons have played an important role in this regard, particularly during times of war and natural calamities.

During the Second World War, the Shanxi Provincial Government had jurisdiction over only 23 counties, but it was not easy to feed the 1.2 million soldiers and civilians in this poor area. Life was hard. For the convenience of the officers and staff members, the local ruler Yan Xishan issued "feed purchase certificates" and "grain tickets" (grain coupons). With a grain coupon, military and civil staff members each could get their ration of wheat and rice. With each "feed purchase certificate", the farmers should provide half kilogram of grain and five kilograms of fodder. Farmers could use the grain tickets they received

to offset the agricultural tax they normally paid in grain. In fact these two types of certificates were paper money in another form.

The grain coupons of that period had a very interesting design. The 1942 Shanxi grain coupons were designed jointly by professional designers and printers from Beijing and Shanghai who fled to

Shanxi because of the Japanese invasion. These printings were so exquisite that they became the models of the various grain coupons issued nation-wide in 1955. The grain coupons issued in the 1960s reflect the political situation of that time. On each of them a quotation of Mao Zedong is printed. There were also other coupons for the supplies of cakes or other grain-related products issued by each province or city.

Grain coupons can be classified in various ways: by face value in terms of weight; by the year of issuance; by the region of circulation, such as the province, municipality, or township; by the authority issuing them, such as national, military, or catering traders. All in all, the issuance and use of grain coupons offers a fascinating glimpse into certain periods of history.

Translated by Xiong Zhenru



3



4

GRAIN COUPONS

Article by
Zhao Huixian



5

L E I S U R E



The Joy of Getting Drenched — at the Water Splashing Festival

Photos & article by So Long Chi





A Cold Water Splash As Temperatures Reach 33°C

The Water Splashing Festival of the Dai people of Xishuangbanna is a very famous occasion at which participants use whatever buckets or containers they have handy to splash and thoroughly soak fellow revellers. It is the grand finale of the Dai New Year celebrations in April for the arrival of spring and a traditional way of washing away dirt and evil and wishing good fortune to all for the coming year.

One August day in Hong Kong as the temperature soared to 33°C and the sun beat down mercilessly in an unbearable heat wave, I found myself yearning to be splashed with a gigantic bucket of water. As I imagined cool water on this scorching day, my telephone rang; a friend wanted to invite me to the China Folk Culture Village in Shenzhen, just across the border from Hong Kong, where a Water Splashing Festival was being demonstrated. Without hesitation, I readily accepted and immediately caught the train to Shenzhen. It was 2:30 in the afternoon when we arrived. Outside the China Folk Culture Village, peddlers were hawking their wares — basins, buckets, water-guns, and anything else that could hold water. The children were buying the newest product, a high-velocity water-gun, with visions of great fun.

The Water Splashing Festival site was 30 by 30 metres, as large as half a football field. Nine water-spouting dragons were



Energetic Young Men and Graceful Girls

placed around the outside, and a golden statue of the Buddha was placed in the middle for the important "bathing the Buddha" ceremony, a sign of reverence to the Buddha.


As the time passed and the sun continued to heat up the expanding crowd, everyone grew increasingly impatient. Suddenly, at around 3:00 p.m., the air resounded with the beating of gongs and drums, as teams of native Dai people from



Yunnan marched into the court. The men were strapping, sun-tanned young fellows, while the women were fair-skinned and moved with a graceful agility. Anticipation peaked as the Peacock Girl, the mascot of the Dai, appeared on the scene. A master of ceremony took the floor, telling the ancient tale behind the festival. Once upon a time a fire demon seized control of Xishuangbanna and kidnapped seven beautiful girls. One night, a girl by the name of Nong Xiang killed the demon by decapitating it with her hair. The head of the demon turned into a fire ball rolling around and setting fire to everything it touched. The girls fetched water and put out the fires. The legend eventually evolved into the Water Splashing Festival.

The story-teller had hardly finished his story when the Dai men swung into action — water was fetched from four giant vats in the shape of dragon boats. They made wolf cries, while the girls screamed in affected alarm. We lost no time into the swing of things. At first everyone was standing in a circle and gently sprinkling water to one another, but before long it was chaotic and we began tossing water at whoever came into sight. A few mischievous Dai young men started splashing onlookers, sending

them fleeing in all directions, particularly those with cameras. Soon the four vats were empty, and the revellers turned to the nine ringside dragons for more "ammunition". As the fun peaked, some people were forced to scoop water from pools on the ground.

The turmoil died down with the participants' exhaustion. Puddles were everywhere. Some participants were smart and had brought dry clothing to change into, but those like us who hadn't, went home looking like a bunch of bedraggled chickens. 

Translated by Ling Yuan

Note: The Water Splashing Festival is held from the middle of July to the end of August this year at the Folk Culture Village in Shenzhen.



5

Water Tossing Chaos



Previous page:

1. A ceremony is held before the water splashing begins.
2. Energetic Dai young men
3. When the water-tank boats are emptied, people turn to the fountains for more water.
4. Everybody has fun when water is tossed.
5. The performers are all Dai people from Yunnan.
6. Children and adults — all the same
7. Dancing in the rain
8. Ready to leave?
9. Happily drenched



Big Step in Improving Water Supply, Dalian

Dalian, a major port city in Northeast China's Liaoning Province, has significantly improved its urban water supply networks and facilities. The city has so far achieved a daily water supply capacity of 1.2 million cubic metres, following the completion of a project to divert water from a local river in 1997. To further improve its water supply, the city is planning more water projects, including a water pumping plant with a daily capacity of 300,000 cubic metres, a water purification plant with a daily capacity of 400,000 cubic metres, and an 89.1-kilometre water supply pipeline with a diameter of 1.82 metres. Meanwhile, new treatment processes will be applied to the city's old water pipelines.

Giant Whole Jade, Liaoning

A huge colourful jade has been discovered in Northeast China's Liaoning Province. Weighing 50,000-60,000 tons and with a diameter of about 30 metres, it is believed to be the world's largest jade piece. Now the miners are facing the serious problem of unearthing and shipping the giant jade in one whole piece.

Relics Recovered, Gansu

The Dunhuang City Public Security Bureau has recently recovered a large cache of historical relics pilfered from ancient tombs in the city suburbs and other areas of Northwest China's Gansu Province. The 133 precious relics, dating from the Neolithic Age to the Han Dynasty and the Tang Dynasty, include stone objects, coloured pottery, bronze mirrors, painted bricks and ancient coins. These relics were confiscated from craft shops engaged in illegal sales activities in Dunhuang.

Nuclear Site for Tourism, Qinghai

Qinghai Province in Northwest China is going to open China's first nuclear research centre to tourists. The centre, known as the "Nuclear City", was where both China's first atom and hydrogen bombs were produced and tested. It was closed in 1987, and has been transformed into a tourist spot after strict environmental clearance. A museum will be established to display some of the initial materials, objects and models used for nuclear tests. Located in Haiyan County, the site is 103 kilometres from Xining, capital of Qinghai Province.

200,000-Year-Old Stalagmite Insured, Hunan

A stalagmite of 200,000 years old in the Yellow Dragon Cave in Hunan, Central China, has been insured for 100 million yuan (US\$12 million). This is the first piece of natural heritage to be insured in China. The 19.2-metre-high stalagmite is wide at both ends and thin in the middle — indicating a possibility of breakage. According to the contract signed, the insurance company should pay damages caused by ecological changes, fires, floods, storms or lightning strikes. But damage from earthquakes or human activity is not covered.

Ancient Walnut Tree, Xinjiang

A 500-year-old walnut tree is being protected by the villagers and the local government at Bagqi Town in Hotan county, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. They have established a park, which occupies seven hectares of land surrounding the tree. Known as the "King of Walnut Trees", the ancient tree is 10 metres high, with a crown of 30 metres in diameter. It bears 2,500-3,000 walnuts each year.

Direct Flights to Zhangjiajie, Hunan

Direct flights to Zhangjiajie, a landscape attraction in Central China's Hunan Province, from foreign countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Japan will be available in 1999. This is part of the program to develop Zhangjiajie into an international tourist destination in 2010. Zhangjiajie is famous for its elegant mountains and clear waters. It is where China's first state forest park was founded. Since the 1980s, 4 billion yuan (US\$480 million) has been put into infrastructure development and environmental protection in the area. More money will be put into park construction. In one cave, for example, 35 million yuan (US\$4.2 million) will be spent for protection and improvement because this 25-kilometre-long cave is said to contain all the geographical phenomena of a karst cave.

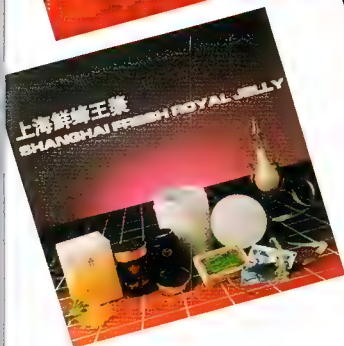
Imperial City Wall Found, Beijing

Two sections of the ancient imperial city wall dating back over 600 years to the Ming Dynasty were recently discovered in downtown Beijing. The ruins, separated by some 700 metres, were found near the Imperial Garden in Dongcheng District. Archaeologists believe that the two sections were part of the nine-kilometre northern side of the second wall surrounding the Forbidden City. Between this second wall and the imperial palace were offices of military departments and dynastic organisations. The new discovery has further verified the location of the ancient capital's outer walls and will provide clues for further studies of the structure and architectural design of the imperial city. Scholars are currently examining wall bricks bearing the construction date and names of craftsmen so as to identify the age of the city walls.

上海市醫藥保健品進出口公司 Shanghai Medicines & Health Products Import & Export Corporation

Lines of Business:

Import and export of
Chinese medical herbs,
Chinese patent drugs,
medicated liquor,
health products,
medical intermediates,
pharmaceuticals and their preparations,
medical instruments & equipment,
surgical dressings,
medicines and health products,
medical complete equipment and
single machines, and
processing with supplied materials



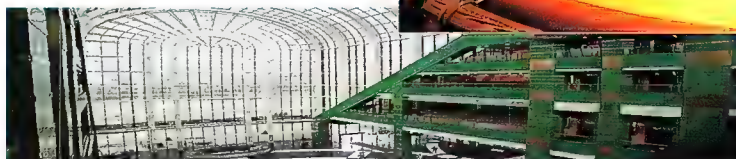
上海市醫藥保健品進出口公司
Shanghai Medicines & Health
Products Import & Export Corporation

27 Zhongshan Road (E.1), Shanghai, China
Cable: 'MEHECOS' SHANGHAI Telex: 33556 MHIEC CN Fax: 021-63291609
Tel: 63290161 Please contact Samples & Propaganda Dept.





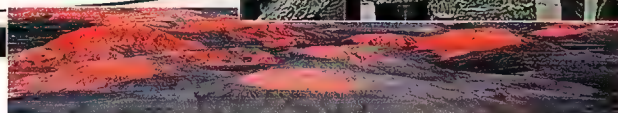
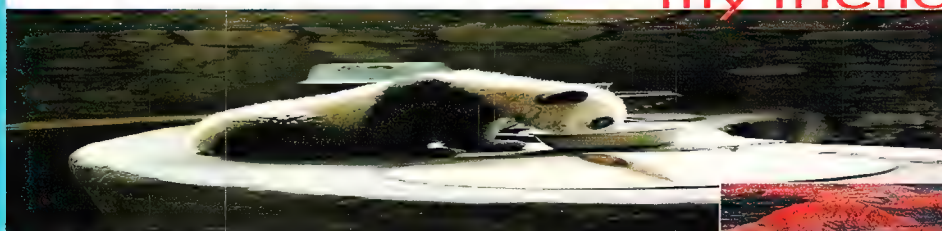
Dalian Shan Xiaogang



Dalian in Northeast China has already become a boom city. HIGHLIGHTS in our next issue will unveil both the past and present scenes of this **northern port city**. There, you will see the gloomy castle where the Japanese-Russian battle took place long ago, as well as the numerous charming beaches. DISCOVERIES will tell the story of **a young panda** who became an unexpected guest in a farmhouse, making friends with people and dancing with chickens...

Huang Yanhong

Lovely panda, my friend



Blood-red mountains, wandering wolves, colourful forest, lodging in the wilderness after dark.... A group of photography buffs who headed for **Junggar Basin** in Xinjiang never expected that an "antique" car would have become a "trouble-maker". Thankfully, the scenery was splendid there...

JunggarBasin, Xinjiang

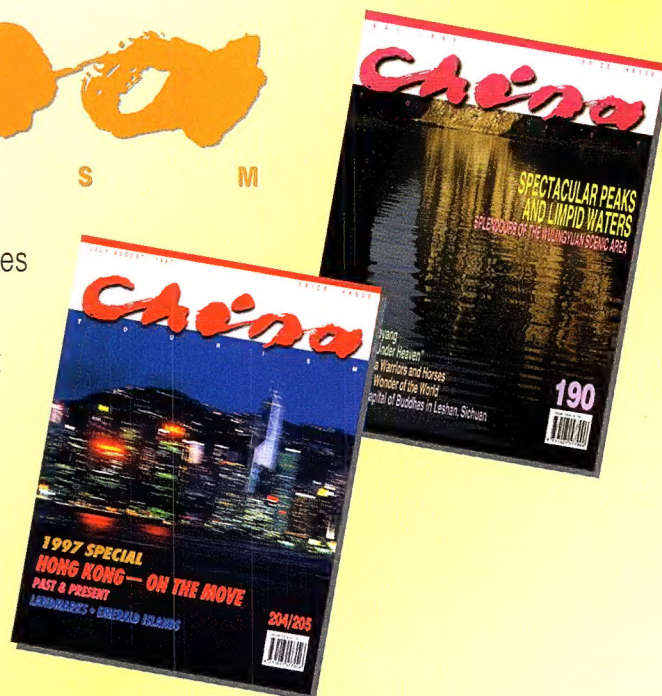
Liu Hui



China

T O U R I S M

- Brings you every month the many exotic and exciting faces of China.
- Its powerful image and in-depth text tell vividly about the people, culture, arts, customs, places, history and lifestyle of the country.
- Unlike other magazines which list out hard facts and figures, *China Tourism* helps you understand China from its heart.



Subscribe now to make sure this beautiful magazine is delivered to your home every month and get a free Chinese classical music CD or a free copy of one of our travel books.

Yes! Please enter my subscription for the term indicated below.

- ☐ I would like to subscribe to *China Tourism* for one year.
Please send me a free Chinese classical music CD.
- ☐ I would like to subscribe to *China Tourism* for two years.
Please send me a free copy of ☐ *Focus on Xinjiang* or ☐ *Focus on Shaanxi*.

From month / / 1998

- ☐ Cheque enclosed
(made payable to: **HONG KONG CHINA TOURISM PRESS**)
- ☐ Please debit my credit card ☐ VISA ☐ MASTER CARD ☐ AE

Card no. & Exp. date: _____

Signature: _____

Surname: (Mr./Mrs.) _____

Given Name: _____

Address: _____

Country: _____ Tel: _____

Subscriber No: _____ Date: _____

Subscription Rates

CHINESE EDITION

- ☐ 1 yr (12 issues) HK\$228/US\$29
- ☐ 2 yrs (24 issues) HK\$420/US\$54

ENGLISH EDITION

- ☐ 1 yr (12 issues) HK\$296/US\$38
- ☐ 2 yrs (24 issues) HK\$540/US\$69

Postage (Per one-year subscription)

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pick up from HK China Tourism Press | Free |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hong Kong Surface Mail | HK\$86/US\$11 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Macau, PRC, Taiwan Surface Mail | HK\$140/US\$18 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overseas (Asia except Japan) Surface Mail | HK\$216/US\$28 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overseas (Non-Asia and Japan) Surface Mail | HK\$228/US\$30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overseas (Asia except Japan) Airmail | HK\$394/US\$51 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overseas (Non-Asia and Japan) Airmail | HK\$494/US\$64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Charge for Registered Mail | HK\$156/US\$20 |

Return to: **HONG KONG CHINA TOURISM PRESS** (Circulation Department),
24/F Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road,
Quarry Bay, Hong Kong.
Tel: 2561 8001 Fax: 2561 8196

WEAR IT ONCE, LOVE IT FOREVER 一穿鍾情



ALLAXDO

- The champion of export in Shanghai since 1989 — US\$400 million
- Cooperation with famous international designers since the 1970s
- High quality products sold in famous department stores and boutiques in Europe, America and Japan
- Processing for clients — 95% of its total exports
- The best service
- Forging ahead towards globalisation



東方國際集團 上海市絲綢進出口有限公司

Orient International Holding Shanghai Silk Import & Export Co., Ltd. O.I.C.

上海吳興路283號申誼大廈1-13樓

283, Wuxin Road, 1-13/F Shenyi Mansion, Shanghai 200030, China Tel: 86-21-64662288 Fax: 86-21-64677788 64677878

E-Mail: GSMAIL@SHSILK.CO.CN

民族智慧 東方魅力

Charm of the Nation

Charm of Dong Fang Hotel



廣州東方賓館與中國出口商品交易會會場近在咫尺，距火車站僅1公里，飛機場6公里，佔盡地利之優勢。擁有園林式的優雅環境，中西美食佳餚薈萃，商務娛樂配套齊全，以賓客為軸心的服務完善。下榻“東方賓館”，是商務、旅遊人士之最佳選擇。

Only one step away from the China Trade Fair Centre, 1km from the railway station and 6kms from the airport, Dong Fang Hotel is located in the best place in Guangzhou. The garden - style surroundings, delicious food, kinds of entertainment, first - class business facilities and perfect service are special for you.

Dong Fang Hotel is the best choice for businessmen and tourists.



訂房熱線

廣州東方賓館

地址：中國廣州市流花路120號
電話：(86-20)86662946
傳真：(86-20)86662775
電傳：44439 GZDFH CN
郵政編碼：510016
香港中國旅行社海外各分社
港、澳、台及海外各大旅行社

For reservation, please contact

Dong Fang Hotel, Guangzhou

Add : 120, Liu Hua Road, Guangzhou, China
Tel : (86-20)86662946
Fax : (86-20)86662775
Tlx : 44439 GZDFH CN
Post code: 510016
Overseas offices of China Travel Service (HK)Ltd.
Major travel agents in Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and other countries



東方賓館
DONG FANG HOTEL
GUANGZHOU CHINA



 敦煌

 DunHuang

 Cigarettes

千年印刻
 悠悠吐出
 凝结岁月的醇厚
 几缕长长的心绪



中国烟草上海进出口公司 CHINA TOBACCO I/E SHANGHAI CORP.

地址：中国上海市浦东新区杨高中路2775号
 Add: 2775 Yang Gao Central, Pudong New Area, Shanghai, China.
 电话 Tel: 58336868 传真 Fax: 86-21-58336059 电传 Tlx: 33496 SHATO CN 邮编 Post Code: 200135

HK GOVERNMENT
 HEALTH WARNING
 SMOKING CAN
 CAUSE CANCER
 MIDDLE TAR

香港政府忠告市民
 吸煙
 可以致癌
 焦油含量中